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FROM THE FRONT

FROM THE FRONT

TRENCH POETRY

SELECTED BY

LIEUTENANT C. E. ANDREWS

AVIATION SECTION, SIGNAL RESERVE CORPS



WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY THE EDITOR

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TRENCH POETRY

THE poetry written in the trenches has become one of the most striking literary phases of the War. Within the last three years, thousands of poems from the front have appeared in newspapers and magazines throughout England. Many of them later have been collected in thin little volumes by the authors, or sometimes they have been printed by friends as memorials to soldier-authors who have fallen. There are already more than a hundred such volumes and others keep appearing.

The authors, of course, are not the mere rank and file. The average soldier's gun is mightier than his pen. He fights or waits or suffers without formulating his thoughts, if, indeed, he thinks at all of the real meaning of his experiences. The songs which Tommy Atkins sings are not very interesting without Tommy to sing them. The nonsensical words of his popular choruses are mere pegs upon which he hangs his ideals of home, peace, or romance:

We've each our Tipperary—near by or wildly
far;
For some it means a fireside, for some it means
a star;
For some it means a journey by homely roads
they know,
For some a spirit's venture where none but theirs
may go.

But the poetry of the trenches is written, most of it, by the men of cultivation,—doctors, dons, journalists, actors, university students. Though two or three of the volumes—and these among the best—are from men who had been navvies, miners, and farm roustabouts, for the most part the authors have written verse before.

Men of a thoughtful turn of mind, or with an eye for the significance of facts, feel the desire for self-expression in the midst of their experiences. And the forms of expression for men of action are naturally the brief ones, familiar letters and short lyrics. These are written in moments of snatched leisure, sometimes in a camp or billet or dugout, or even in a fire-trench; and many are written to while away the enforced leisure of a convalescent hospital. But little of this poetry is "emotion recollected in tranquillity." It is the expression of men who in the midst of action see the picturesque or philo-

sophic aspect of their experience and try to record it. Sergeant John William Streets, who was killed last year, writing of his own poems said: "They were inspired while I was in the trenches, where I have been so busy that I have had little time to polish them. I have tried to picture some thoughts that pass through a man's brain when he dies. I may not see the end of the poems, but hope to live to do so. We soldiers have our views of life to express, though the boom of death is in our ears. We try to convey something of what we feel in this great conflict to those who think of us, and sometimes, alas! mourn our loss. We desire to let them know that in the midst of our keenest sadness for the joy of life we leave behind, we go to meet death grim-lipped, clear-eyed and resolute-hearted." A poem written within the sound of guns is rarely a great contribution to literature, and a critical reader may find barely a half dozen poems in these volumes which he calls great poetry. For example, not even Alan Seeger or Rupert Brooke, the best known of the soldier poets, attained the superb excellence of Mr. Masfield's "August 1914." One must remember that the finest poems of the Civil War were not written by the "forgers of experience," but by "men with the sense of words,"—Whitman, Low-

ell and Emerson. Probably there is something in the Wordsworthian association of tranquillity and poetic composition. Trench verse is usually the work of men who, though not trained and critical poets, are still impelled to write of what they see and feel. They wisely make few attempts in the exalted vein. The splendid bursts of patriotism are only for the few great poets in their finer moments; for such poems require not only exalted feeling, but the sureness and command of the highest art. And no failure can be more complete than the failure to achieve the high style. These soldier poets wisely do not attempt it. The poetasters at home write of war in grandiose periodic cadences; the poetry of men who fight has little of rhetoric, few fine-sounding words. They write of what they see, hear, feel, and think, in direct and vivid language; they are not afraid of dialect, slang, or even vulgarity.

Though one must not expect to find many poems that stand out individually as great, a volume of verse chosen from these little books by men whose names, with rare exceptions, the kingdom of letters has recognized, can give one a more vivid sense of the actualities of war, its transfiguring glories and unnamable horrors, than hundreds of reports, accounts, and discussions.

These poems show the spirit which actuates the men; the men themselves, the facts of their daily life, their duties, their humor, their sufferings, their recreations; the madness, and horror of the attack itself; what soldiers think about when they are alone; and also their heart-uttered memories of dear comrades fallen.

Many of these poems are bits of impressionistic description, what daily scenes at the front look like to men who are part of them. These are sharply etched pictures of vivid realities; they give us the sensations of men on duty in a listening post, a scene in a dugout, dawn or night in the trenches, planes dropping down on the aerodrome after a reconnaissance, the distribution of mail after dark, a signal post or a battalion headquarters during an action. Among the poets who do this sort of thing best are Captain Knight-Adkin, whose contributions to the "Spectator" have been widely quoted, Eric Thirkell Cooper, author of "Soliloquies of a Subaltern," and Gilbert Frankau, whose volume "The Guns" is one of the most real pictures that have come from the front.

Sometimes with this strong sense of fact there is a keen appreciation of the beauty and "magic" which may be anywhere if one's eyes can see more than the grim actualities. There are gleams

of moonlight on wire entanglements and gorgeous pyrotechnics in red and white flares and star shells that light the way to death. Patrick MacGill, author of "Soldier Songs," sees charming fancies in the glow-worms and toad-stools around him as he watches and listens through the night:

But these things you'll see if you come out with
me,
And sit by my side in a shell-shovelled hole,
Where the fairy-bells croon to the ivory moon
When the soldier is out on a listening-patrol.

Then there are the romantic poets who write only of the beauty. They eagerly look for it as a relief from the grimness and pain of their surroundings. They sing of a riot of red poppies in a Flanders field, or a lark whose dawn song is wholly oblivious to the mortal madness below him. These themes are great favorites with the trench poets. A more unusual subject is "The Horse Bathing Parade" of Corporal J. Kersley Holmes, who shows a painter's eye for fine color effects. A theme which several of the poets have chosen is some wonderful old château haunted by the exquisite beauty of the dear dead chatelaines of another time, now inhabited by hurrying aids or swearing sergeants. This

theme, rich in fine sentiment, appears at its best in Alan Seeger's two rare sonnets on "Bellinglise":

Here, where in happier times the huntsman's
 horn
 Echoing from far made sweet midsummer
 eves,
Now serried cannon thunder night and morn,
 Tearing with iron the greenwood's tender
 leaves.

The finer spirits like Seeger who go through the world on a knight-errant quest for beauty find it even where most men see but ugliness and pain.

The realistic poets do their best work in scenes of the attack. There are, naturally, hundreds of these descriptions—every kind of attack and every sort of moment. Sergeant Frank Brown's "Glory" describes how "five volunteers for hell" rescued a Maxim gun left stranded after "a little set-back." Arnold Graves' "Holding the Bridge" is an exciting narrative of an incident that shows that the individual man may be of no less importance today than in a twelfth century fight. Lieutenant Eric Wilkinson's "Twentieth Century Civilization" tells how it feels to receive the enemy's attack, and the last stanza from Captain C. W. Blackall's "Attack!" shows how one feels after successfully taking a trench. These are

poems of war written by men who know; every phrase rings as a harsh and ugly fact. And with all that, stands out the grit and heroism of the men.

But even in the midst of a fight there can be humor in the trenches. It is not a forced humor either; the jokes suggest the natural remarks of men who have been able to keep their sense of proportion. A feeling of physical fitness, too, makes one willing to enjoy what there is in the present moment. The "Anzac Book," a collection of verse, prose, and drawings by the men in the peninsula of Gallipoli, shows how much fun is possible even in the face of suffering, death, and defeat. As examples of this, Lieutenant Kininmouth's "Wail from Ordnance" and M. R.'s "Happy Warrior" are included in the present volume. Patrick MacGill's fine Irish wit delightfully permeates his work, and Sergeant Joseph Lee's "Ballads of Battle" has some very good things. Men's sense of humor is hard to kill; sometimes it thrives rollickingly in the trenches—witness Captain Bruce Bairnsfather!

The soldier's meditations when he is alone are—like those of other people—on the subjects of love, home, and himself. There are many poems expressing what he feels through long

cold watches and heart-breaking silences—thoughts of quiet English lanes, Australian farms, or Canadian lakes and pine forests; thoughts of brown eyes, of farewells, or of regretted moments. Poems of this sort are written, of course, at all times in absence, but these, through the circumstances, have a special interest for us. Of the thoughtful poems on death and self, the world has already accepted Alan Seeger's "I have a Rendezvous with Death" and Rupert Brooke's "The Soldier" as truly great. Another poet, Sergeant J. W. Streets, author of "The Undying Splendor," has done, among other things, a sonnet-sequence, which should give him a place among these greatest soldier poets. His volume reflects an intense love of life together with a resolute facing of death, a spirit which links him with Alan Seeger.

The thought of death runs through all the volumes from the trenches. There are many elegies, both general and personal, and many a gay poem goes into the minor for a single stanza. Corporal Lee prefaces his volume with—

I writ these songs in a dead man's book;
I stole the strain from a dead man's look;
And if much of death there may seem to be
'Tis because the dead are so dear to me.

I do not mean that the body of this verse is gloomy in tone. The thought of death does not appear as a "Thanatopsis" mood of introspection. Death is merely a great fact with which one becomes familiar, so familiar that it may be even jested with. The soldier's attitude is that of a man who plays his game and accepts all its conditions. Captain C. W. Blackall's "Song of the Trench" puts it well:

Perhaps a bullet may find its mark,
And then there's a funeral after dark;
And you say, as you lay him beneath the sod,
A sportsman's soul has gone to his God.
Behind the trench in the open ground,
There's a little cross and a little mound;
And if at your heart-strings you feel a wrench,
Remember he died for his blooming trench—
Yes, he died like a man for his trench.

In the elegies, with the mood of intense personal loss there is this same attitude of acceptance—no revolt against fate, or protest against war or the world. These poets are also soldiers. Their elegies are perhaps the best work of the trench poets. Every volume has several of them, with titles like "Fallen," "My Chum," "Missing," "In Flanders Fields," "Memories," "The Unburied." They are straightforward and simple, most of them, with the sentiment of men who feel more

than they show. The Australian Frank E. Westbrook's "Good-Bye," which was written at Gallipoli, distinctly has this mood; and I know of no poem with a pathos that so takes one by the throat as Patrick MacGill's "Matey." For an elegy in the dignified style for a public occasion we have, in Alan Seeger's "Ode in Memory of the American Volunteers Fallen for France," an ode equalled but two or three times in all American literature.

In the poetry of Seeger, who I think stands out as chief of the fighting poets, English or American, there is preëminently a sense of the exalting power of the war on men's minds. Beyond the mere praise of the accepted soldier virtues, he sings the choicer spirit's lofty freedom from the meaner interests of the world. He sees the fighting hosts transfigured with a grander cosmic beauty; they are playing the great drama of the universe as its Author planned it; they are moved by the forces which guide Arcturus with his sons. This larger vision in which men transcend themselves and see all life in true proportion comes seldom even to poets in times of peace. But a sense of

—kinship with the stars that only war
Is great enough to lift men's spirit to,

more and more recurs in recent literature. Sergeant Streets has it in these lines from the "Requiem":

Theirs is the mighty music of the fadeless stars;
The chant of Life, exultant with high ecstasy;
The strength of suffering gods who toil with
 many scars
To wrest promethean fire for dead humanity.
Beyond our ken, beyond the limit of the years
They sweep into the soul the freedom of the
 spheres.

Many of the finer war poems present the conflict as a merging of the individual into the spirit of his race—the mood of Hardy's novels, or the race merged into the soul of humanity—the mood of Whitman's poetry. This unity of past and present in the ever repeated struggles of history appears in Corporal Lee's "1815-1915: One Hundred Years Ago Today,—To My Grandfather Who Fought at Waterloo," and again in Corporal Holmes' "Somewhere in France":

Long, long ago the English hosts in sunshine and
 in rain,
Came tramping where their stubborn sons now
 march to war again.

Their bowmen and their halberdiers in mud and
mist and snow,
Went swinging stoutly forward as our khaki
columns go;
The poplars watched the knights ride by with
sword and mace and lance,
As they watched us through the sleet-storm in
these leafless woods of France.

An exalted patriotism in which the poet rises above his own personality in the great desire to be part of the eternal spirit of England is the theme of Rupert Brooke's glorious sonnet "The Soldier"; and the thought of England on the eve of war united to the England of all other older wars, through the repeated farewells and repeated sacrifices which the same ancient soil has known from age to age, is the mood of the greatest poem of recent years, Mr. Masfield's "August, 1914."

War is having an exalted effect on men's hearts when they think in terms of infinite relationships. And we see this effect in the letters as well as in the poems of the soldier poets. "If I should fall do not grieve for me. I shall be one with the sun and the flowers," wrote Leslie Coulson, author of "From an Outpost," in one of his last letters. This is a feeling that comes to one who thinks of the thousand struggles of history

and the million repetitions of heroic deaths, while Nature, the Neutral, looks on impartially; the stars that shone on Loos and Neuve Chapelle looked coldly down on Cressy and Waterloo. This cosmic sense revealed to the chosen souls who fight at the front may reflect through the world behind the lines and make men rise to interests greater than their own, and see their earth in a larger perspective.

FROM THE FRONT

FROM THE FRONT

THE SONG OF THE TRENCH

December, 1914

This is the song of the blooming trench:
It's sung by us and it's sung by the French;
It's probably sung by the German Huns;
But it isn't all beer, and skittles, and buns.
It's a song of water, and mud and slime,
And keeping your eyes skinned all the time.
Though the putrid "bully" may kick up a stench,
Remember, you've got to stick to your trench—
Yes, stick like glue to your trench.

You dig while it's dark, and you work while it's
light,
And then there's the "listening post" at night.

Though you're soaked to the skin and chilled to
the bone;

Though your hands are like ice, and your feet
like stone;

Though your watch is long, and your rest is brief,
And you pray like hell for the next relief;

Though the wind may howl, and the rain may
drench,

Remember, you've got to stick to your trench—
Yes, stick like mud to your trench.

Perhaps a bullet may find its mark,
And then there's a funeral after dark;
And you say, as you lay him beneath the sod,
A sportsman's soul has gone to his God.
Behind the trench, in the open ground,
There's a little cross and a little mound;
And if at your heart-strings you feel a wrench,
Remember, he died for his blooming trench—
Yes, he died like a man for his trench.

There's a rush and a dash, and they're at your
wire,

And you open the hell of a rapid fire;

The Maxims rattle, the rifles flash,

And the bombs explode with a sickening crash.

You give them lead, and you give them steel,

Till at last they waver, and turn, and reel.

You've done your job—there was never a blench

You've given them hell, and you've saved your
trench;

By God, you've stuck to your trench!

The daylight breaks on the rain-soaked plain

(For some it will never break again),

And you thank your God, as you're "standing
to,"

You'd your bayonet clean, and your bolt worked
true.

For your comrade's rifle had jammed and stuck,

And he's lying there, with his brains in the muck.
So love your gun—as you haven't a wench—
And she'll save your life in the blooming trench—
Yes, save your life in the trench.

CAPT. C. W. BLACKALL.

“FALL IN!”

*Oh! we are a ragged, motley crew,
Each with a tale to tell
Of a life of ease—a life of toil,
A life lived out in hell.
Whate'er befall at the bugle call
We'll do our business well.*

The bugle bawls a sharp “Fall In,”
The section sergeants shout;
A stampede on the markers,
And the company turns out.
And now you have us into line,
Just cast your eye within,
And read the tale of these soldiers hale
Who answered the cry “Fall In!”

That guy with the coat split up the back,
And his forage cap aslant,
Is a minister's son—and a son of a gun.
You should hear the boulder rant
When the rations aren't quite up to scratch,
Or his rifle jams his thumb.
He slips a cog, and a language fog
Spurts up and begins to hum.

The other, with his mustache trimmed,
And puttees that need a shave,
Is a slum child from Toronto,
But a splendid chap is Dave.
His upper lip is his idol,
Boot dubbin is its pomade;
He's tried to sup from a mustache cup—
But he knows his work with a spade.

There's another chap down on the left
Who tacks M.A. to his name;

He'll talk of art or the price of wheat—

To him it's all the same.

His looks are insignificant,

In a battered pair of jeans,

No one would think that such a gink

Was a graduate of Queen's.

The sergeant of our section is

A most peculiar cuss;

He wears a serge sans chevrons,—

No need of them with us.

His rifle's carefully curried,

He's a voice like Kingdom Come;

He was a clod who carried a hod,

But can talk a drill book dumb.

The corporal with the greasy clothes,

And an eye of ebony black

(He got it in an argument

With the thief who stole his pack);

His office-pallored face is now
Red dyed with honest tan;
A lawyer he that was to be
A city's coming man.

Down in the motor transport lines
You will find a goggled runt
Who drives an ammunition van
Thro' mud lakes at the front.
He always has a life-sized grouch;
He grumbles at his fare;
His van floor ain't a feather bed—
And he's a millionaire.

That fellow in the ulster,
Which has seen most cruel use,
And a pair of squelching rubber boots
Which leak without excuse,
He used to be a Civil clerk,
Perched high upon a stool,

But dropped his tome to learn to comb
An ammunition mule.

Yon bulldog face with the deep-cleft chin
Is owned by a miner old,
Who has roasted in California
And frozen in Klondike cold.
His thirst is a thing to conjure with;
He shoots like the bolt of Fate;
The dug-out roars with his husky snores
When he's back from patrolling late.

*Oh! we are a jolly, motley crew,
With many a tale to tell
Of a life of love, a life of hate,
A life lived out in hell.*

*Whate'er we've been, wipe out the sin—
We'll do our business well.*

SERGT. FRANK S. BROWN.

(Killed in action, Feb. 3, 1915.)

THE VOLUNTEER

Sez I: My Country Calls? Well, let it call.
I grins perlately and declines wiv thanks.
Go, let 'em plaster every blighted wall,
'Ere's one they don't stampede into the ranks.
Them politicians with their greasy ways;
Them empire-grabbers—fight for 'em? No fear!
I've seen this mess a-comin' from the days
Of Algyserious and Aggydear:
I've felt me passion rise and swell,
But . . . wot the 'ell, Bill? Wot the 'ell?

Sez I: My Country? Mine? I likes their cheek.
Me mud-bespattered by the cars they drive,
Wot makes my measly thirty bob a week,
And sweats red blood to keep meself alive!
Fight for the right to slave that they may spend,

Them in their mansions, me 'ere in my slum?
No, let 'em fight wot's something to defend:
But me, I've nothin'—let the Kaiser come.
And so I cusses 'ard and well,
But . . . wot the 'ell, Bill? Wot the 'ell?

Sez I: If they would do the decent thing,
And shield the missis and the little 'uns,
Why, even I might shout "God save the King,"
And face the chances of them 'ungry guns.
But we've got three, another on the way;
It's that wot makes me snarl and set me jor;
The wife and nippers, wot of 'em, I say,
If I gets knocked out in this blasted war?
Gets proper busted by a shell,
But . . . wot the 'ell, Bill? Wot the 'ell?

Ay, wot the 'ell's the use of all this talk?
To-day some boys in blue was passin' me,

And some of 'em they 'ad no legs to walk,
And some of 'em they 'ad no eyes to see.
And—well, I couldn't look 'em in the face,
And so I'm goin', goin' to declare
I'm under forty-one and take me place
To face the music with the bunch out there.

A fool, you say! Maybe you're right.

I'll 'ave no peace unless I fight.

I've ceased to think; I only know

I've gotta go, Bill, gotta go.

ROBERT W. SERVICE.

DAWN IN THE TRENCHES

Dawn o' day! And birds a-singing;
Sniping starts along the line;
"Stand to, all," comes quickly ringing,
"Pray the coming day is fine;
Mind the pools from last night's drizzle,
Post 'day-sentries' straight away—"
Rifles cleaned whilst rashers frizzle—
So to us comes break o' day.

ERIC THIRKELL COOPER.

THE TRUMPETER

We hear him daily, far too soon,
Announcing day begun,
Before the setting of the moon,
Or rising of the sun—
Forth from our dreams he bids us wake,
And find our boots for Britain's sake.

His plangent music drives us out
To shiver on parade;
All day it orders us about,
And has to be obeyed—
We take our breakfast, dinner, tea
At mercy of his melody.

The regiment mustered for a drill
Must note his briefest call;

They halt or gallop at his will,
The master of us all—
His lips control the fearsome force
That represents five hundred horse.

And what of him, the man behind
This brazen voice of power?
Is he of superhuman kind,
Some warrior grim and dour,
Who thus maneuvers with a breath
Us, who'd obey him to the death?

He's five feet high, or rather less,
A laddie pale and slim,
Who's seen, but seldom heard, unless
His trumpet speaks for him—
He wakes us early, yet, poor elf,
Perforce must be first up himself!

CORP. W. KERSLEY HOLMES.

A SONG OF THE AIR

This is the song of the Plane—
The creaking, shrieking plane,
The throbbing, sobbing plane,
And the moaning, groaning wires:—
The engine—missing again!
One cylinder never fires!

Hey ho! for the Plane!

This is the song of the Man—
The driving, striving man,
The chosen, frozen man:—
The pilot, the man-at-the-wheel,
Whose limit is all that he can,
And beyond, if the need is real!

Hey ho! for the Man!

This is the song of the Gun—
The muttering, stuttering gun,
The maddening, gladdening gun :—
That chuckles with evil glee
At the last, long dive of the Hun,
With its end in eternity!

Hey ho! for the Gun!

This is the song of the Air—
The lifting, drifting air,
The eddying, steadying air,
The wine of its limitless space :—
May it nerve us at last to dare
Even death with undaunted face!

Hey ho! for the Air!

“OBSERVER, R. F. C.”

TWO PICTURES

Dawn . . .

And the dewy plain

Awakes to life and sound—

Where on the flying-ground

The ghostly hangars blaze with lights again.

The giant birds of prey

Creep forth to a new day,

And one by one,

As morning gilds the dome,

Leave the gray aërodrome—

—The day's begun.

Dusk . . .

And the vanish'd sun

Still streaks the evening skies:

Below, the prone Earth lies

Darken'd, wherever warring Night has won.

The 'planes, returning, show

Deep black in the afterglow,

And one by one

Drop down from the higher airs,

—Down, down, the invisible stairs—

—The day is done.

“OBSERVER, R. F. C.”

THE SAILING OF THE FLEET

A signal flutters at the Flagship's fore,
And a deep pulse
Stirs in the mighty hulls
Slow wheeling seaward, where, beyond the Bar,
Half veiled in gloom,
Those messengers of doom
The lean Destroyers are.

From the thronged piers
Faintly, the sound of cheers
Tossed by the winds afar . . .

With gathering speed
The gray, grim shapes proceed—
The Might of England—to uphold the Law
'Gainst blackest treachery.

And the same courage high
That fired those valiant hearts at Trafalgar,
Burning from age to age,
Our proudest heritage,
Pierces disquieting war-clouds like a star,
As, burdened with a Nation's hopes and fears,
The Battle Fleet of England sweeps to war.

LIEUT. N. M. F. CORBETT, R.N.

THE MEN BEHIND THE TUBE

(Torpedo-Boat Destroyer Flotilla)

*The battleship, she rules the seas;
The cruiser helps her out;
The men that man her hungry guns
Are men indeed and stout;
But none of all those sailor-men,
With steady brain and eye,
Can teach the swift destroyer's crew
The way to fight and die!*

*While the man in the cruiser is sleepin',
The rain drummin' over 'is 'ead,
The little destroyers are creepin',
The mouth o' their stacks glowin' red,
Out through the night an' the darkness,*

Lashed by the spray an' the wind,
For we're out an' away at the break o' the day
A leavin' the slow 'uns be'ind!

If the man in the cruiser is dyin',
The yell o' 'is armament done,
The crash o' the wireless acryin'
Will bring us around on the run.
We don't do the most o' the shoutin'!
We *fight* an' we give it 'em 'ot,
For it's God for the best at the tube-layin' test
An' 'ell for the one wot gets shot.

When the panicky searchlights are flittin'
An' the seas are aflood wi' the light,
The fear-maddened guns begin spittin'
As soon as we come into sight.
We 'erd them like sheep as we kill them,
They glow in their 'alos o' flame:

Then it's death at a blow for the man 'oo is slow
An' life for the man 'oo can aim!

We are pawns in the game—never counted—
But pawns that have learned 'ow to die,
For when ev'ry gun is dismantled
An' all o' the tubes is awry,
The boats driftin' wrecks on the combers
An' water aroar in the hold,
We stand till we drown an' the vessel goes
down—
The same as our fathers of old!

The bugles are wailin' "Good-bye!"
There's blood in the sea an' the sky,
Keep touch as you go—What's that thunder below?
The bulk-heads what's gone—an' now we must
go

The same as our fathers of old—

Cap the quarter-deck!—

The same as our fathers of old!

The battleship, she rules the seas;

The cruiser helps her out;

The men that man her hungry guns

Are men indeed and stout;

But none of all those sailor-men,

With steady brain and eye,

Can teach the swift destroyer's crew

The way to fight and die!

HOWARD STEELE.

THE HOUNDS OF THE NIGHT

As after the rains,
On the Athi plains
The wild dog streams
In his hunting teams
And seeks the feeding buck,
So after the fight,
In the gloom of night,
The destroyer hounds
In leaping bounds
Cast round to try their luck.

As a grazing herd
At their leader's word
Will hark for the beat
Of the padding feet,

That tells the pack is near,
 So big ships at night
 Seek the patch o' white
 That will show the track
 Of that hunting pack,
 And how it is they steer.

There is little sound
 When a hunting hound
 Chokes out the breath
 And delivers death
 Among the startled buck.
 —Tho' a gun must crash,
 Torpedoes splash.

.
 There is never a sound
 Till the mark is found,
 And a ship of the line is struck.

“ETIENNE” (LIEUT. R. N.).

SIGNALS

The hot wax drips from the flares
On the scrawled pink forms that litter
The bench where he sits; the glitter
Of stars is framed by the sandbags atop of the
dug-out stairs.

And the lagging watch hands creep;
And his cloaked mates murmur in sleep—
Forms he can wake with a kick—
And he hears, as he plays with the pressel-switch,
the strapped receiver click,
On his ear that listens, listens;
And the candle-flicker glistens
On the rounded brass of the switch-board where
the red wires cluster thick.

Wires from the earth, from the air;
Wires that whisper and chatter,

At night, when the trench-rats patter
And nibble among the rations and scuttle back
to their lair;

Wires that are never at rest;
For the linesmen tap them and test,
And ever they tremble with tone;
And he knows from a hundred signals the buz-
zing call of his own,
The breaks and the vibrant stresses,—
The F, and the G, and the Esses,
That call his hand to the answering key and his
mouth to the microphone.

For always the laid guns fret
On the words that his mouth shall utter,
When rifle and Maxim stutter
And the rockets volley to starward from the
spurting parapet;
And always his ear must hark

To the voices out of the dark;
For the whisper over the wire,
From the bombed and the battered trenches where
 the wounded redden the mire;
For a sign to waken the thunder
Which shatters the night in sunder
With the flash of the leaping muzzles and the
 beat of battery-fire.

GILBERT FRANKAU.

·AMMUNITION COLUMN

I am only a cog in a giant machine, a link of
an endless chain:—

And the rounds are drawn, and the rounds are
fired, and the empties return again;

Railroad, lorry, and limber, battery, column, and
park;

To the shelf where the set fuse waits the breech,
from the quay where the shells embark.

We have watered and fed, and eaten our beef;
the long dull day drags by,

As I sit here watching our “Archibalds” strafing
an empty sky;

Puff and flash on the far-off blue round the speck
one guesses the plane—

Smoke and spark of the gun-machine that is fed
by the endless chain.

I am only a cog in a giant machine, a little link
of the chain,

Waiting a word from the wagon-lines that the
guns are hungry again:—

Column-wagon to battery-wagon, and battery-
wagon to gun;

To the loader kneeling 'twixt trail and wheel
from the shops where the steam-lathes run.

There's a lone mule braying against the line
where the mud cakes fetlock-deep;

There's a lone soul humming a hint of a song
in the barn where the drivers sleep;

And I hear the pash of the orderly's horse as
he canters him down the lane—

Another cog in the gun-machine, a link in the
self-same chain.

I am only a cog in a giant machine, but a vital
link of the chain;

And the Captain has sent from the wagon-line to
fill his wagons again;

From the wagon-limber to gunpit dump; from
loader's forearm at breech

To the working party that melts away when the
shrapnel bullets screech.

So the restless section pulls out once more in col-
umn of route from the right

At the tail of a blood-red afternoon; so the flux
of another night

Bears back the wagons we fill at dawn to the
sleeping column again—

Cog on cog in the gun-machine, link on link in
the chain!

GILBERT FRANKAU.

HORSE-BATHING PARADE

A few clouds float across the grand blue sky,
The glorious sun has mounted zenith-high,
Mile upon mile of sand, flat, golden, clean,
And bright, stretch north and south, and fringed
 with green,
The rough dunes fitly close the landward view.
All else is sea; somewhere in misty blue
The distant coast seems melting into air—
Earth, sky, and ocean, all commingling there—
And one bold, lonely rock, whose guardian light
Glistens afar by day, a spire snow white.
Here, where the ceaseless blue-green rollers dash
Their symmetry to dazzling foam and flash,
We ride our horses, silken flanks ashine,
Spattered and soaked with flying drops of brine,

The sunny water tosses round their knees,
Their smooth tails shimmer in the singing breeze.
White streaks of foam sway round us, to and
fro,

With shadows swaying on the sand below;
The horses snort and start to see the foam,
And hear the breaking roar of waves that come,
Or, pawing, splash the brine, and so we stand,
And hear the surf rush hissing up the sand.

CORP. W. KERSLEY HOLMES.

“THE MERCY SHIP”

Above the distant skyline by degrees,
Snow-white and shining in the peaceful sun,
The Mercy Ship appears upon the seas
With those whose fighting for a while is done;
Yet some there be that struggle still with pain,
And agony too terrible for speech,
And some there be who'll never fight again,
Who've journeyed where no enemy can reach.

O winds be merciful, O waves be kind,
To these poor victims of a mad mankind.

No cheers to greet, no friendly flag to dip,
No crowded quay—in silence she arrives;
Such is the coming of the Mercy Ship,
With all her honored freight of human lives.

And one by one the wounded reach the shore,
Till all have passed—then, stately and serene—
The Mercy Ship returns to bear once more
The broken martyrs of the War Machine.

O winds be merciful, O waves be kind,
To these poor victims of a mad mankind.

ERIC THIRKELL COOPER.

THE BATHE

Come friend and swim. We may be better then,
But here the dust blows ever in the eyes
And wrangling round are weary fevered men,
Forever mad with flies.

I cannot sleep, nor even long lie still,
And you have read your April paper twice;
Tomorrow we must stagger up the hill
To man a trench and live among the lice.

But yonder, where the Indians have their goats,
There is a rock stands sheer above the blue,
Where one may sit and count the bustling boats
And breath the cool air through;
May find it still is good to be alive,
May look across and see the Trojan shore

Twinkling and warm, may strip, and stretch, and
dive,—

And for a space forget about the war.

Then will we sit and talk of happy things,
Home and “the High” and some far fighting
friend,

And gather strength for what the morrow brings,
For that may be the end.

It may be we shall never swim again,
Never be clean and comely to the sight,
May rot untombed and stink with all the slain,
Come, then and swim. Come and be clean to-
night.

A. P. HERBERT.

MARCHING SONG

Boots, belt, rifle, and pack—
All you'll need till you come back;
All you'll doff when you lie down to sleep;
All they'll take off when they bury you deep.
Boots, belt, rifle, and pack.

Boots that went light down the Suffolk lane
Will shuffle and drag ere they tread it again.
Nails that rang gay on the cobbled street
Will have pierced through the sock into some-
body's feet.

Boots, belt, rifle, and pack.

Belt—for water-bottle and sword:
One to save life; the other—oh, Lord!

'Fore you've finished with them, you bet,
One will be dry and the other wet.
Boots, belt, rifle, and pack.

Rifle,—the soldier's only friend—
True, if you treat her well, to the end:
Feed her with fire, and the tune she'll play
Will reach the heart of a Turkish Bey.
Boots, belt, rifle, and pack.

Pack—that holds what a man most wants:
A shirt, an overcoat, socks and pants,
A Bible, a photo of heart's desire;
But you'll throw it away when you charge—or
retire.
Boots, belt, rifle, and pack.

Leather and canvas, steel and wood,
They'll stand by you if you're good;

Keep them oiled and keep them dry,
They'll see you home safely—by and by.
Boots, belt, rifle, and pack.

C. J. N. (A.N.Z.A.C.).

MY RIFLE

Some Maxims of Sergeant J. Callary

To the humor and the good humor, of the genial sergeant I owe it that the period of my early drilling, which might thinkably have been a time of deadly dullness, afforded me much entertainment, as well as not a little valuable instruction. The sergeant was always at his best dilating upon the virtues of the rifle, and the necessity for treating it with respect.

I'm the Soldier's surest friend:

I will neither break nor bend.

Straight and sterling, tried and true;

You keep me and I'll keep you.

Bolt and barrel, butt and band;
Caress me with a careful hand.

Stock and swivel, sling and sight;
Rub me down and keep me right.

Striker, trigger, cocking-piece;
Give 'em all some elbow-grease.

Clean me clean, and oil me well;
I'll kill your man and never tell.

Leave me dirty, oil me ill;
You're the chap I'm going to kill.

Leave me lying all awry;
You're the feller's going to die.

Daily do but pull me through;
I will do the same for you.

Only use a "two by four"—
Nothing less, and nothing more.

"Pull-through" rag will do the trick;
A shirt or sock is going to stick!

And keep your bottle full of ile—
Remember the Virgins' parabile!

Handle me with care, I beg,
I'm not so stout as old Mons Meg!

Do not pitch me on the ground—
To break me, a hammer can be found!

I'm the Soldier's surest friend:
I will neither break nor bend.

Straight and sterling, tried and true—
You keep me and I'll keep you.

SERGEANT. JOSEPH LEE.

THE HAPPY WARRIOR

(*A Soliloquy*)

Somewhere in the Anzac Zone

In my sandy dug-out by the sea
Of Saros beyond Samothrace,
I'm as happy as happy can be,
And I'm bent upon washing my face
Before I go into my tea;
But the water's so scarce in this land
That we do all our washing with sand—
And we *always* have sand in our tea.

In my fly-filled dug-out by the sea
Near Anzac, beyond Samothrace,
Both the cook and colonel agree
That you *must* have some semblance of grace

At breakfast, at dinner, and tea,
To prevent you from damning the eyes
Of the savage and pestilent flies—
For you *always* have flies in your tea!

In my shell-swept dug-out by the sea
Of Saros, beyond Samothrace,
I'm as happy as happy can be,
Tho' the shrapnel comes flying apace
Over moorland and mountain and lea—
For I wish you to quite understand,
Tho' the hens have vacated the land,
Yet we *always* have shells with our tea!

M. R. (A.N.Z.A.C.).

“FAGS”

When the cold is making ice cream of the marrow of your bones,
When you're shaking like a jelly and your feet are dead as stones,
When your clothes and boots and blankets, and your rifle and your kit
Are soaked from hell to breakfast, and the dug-out where you sit
Is leaking like a basket, and upon the muddy floor
The water lies in filthy pools, six inches deep or more ;
Tho' life seems cold and mis'erable, and all the world is wet,
You'll always get thro' somehow if you've got a cigarette.

When you're lying in a listening post, 'way out
beyond the wire,

While a blasted Hun, behind a gun, is doing
rapid fire:

When the bullets whine about your head and
sputter on the ground,

When your eyes are strained for every move,
your ears for every sound—

You'd bet your life a Hun patrol is prowling
somewhere near—

A shiver runs along your spine that's very much
like fear:

You'll stick it to the finish—but I'll make a little
bet,

You'd feel a whole lot better if you had a cig-
arette.

When Fritz is starting something and his guns
are on the bust,

When the parapet goes up in chunks and settles
down in dust,

When the roly-poly "rum-jar" comes awabbling
thro' the air,

Till it lands upon a dugout—and the dugout isn't
there;

When the air is full of dust and smoke and
scraps of steel and noise,

And you think you're booked for golden crowns
and other heavenly joys;

When your nerves are all atremble and your
brain is all afret,

It isn't half so hopeless if you've got a cigarette.

When you're waiting for the whistle and your
foot is on the step,

You bluff yourself it's lots of fun, and all the
time you're hep

To the fact that you may stop one 'fore you've
gone a dozen feet,
And you wonder what it feels like, and your
thoughts are far from sweet;
Then you think about a little grave, with R.I.P.
on top,
And you know you've got to go across—altho'
you'd like to stop;
When your backbone's limp as water and you're
bathed in icy sweat,
Why, you'll feel a lot more cheerful if you puff
your cigarette.

CORP. JACK TURNER.

THE SOLDIER MOOD

We were eating chip potatoes underneath the
April stars
That glittered coldly and aloof from earth and
earthly wars;
We were three good pals together, and the day's
hard work was done,
So we munched our chip potatoes, half for food
and half for fun.

Half the world was war's dominion, but the mut-
ter of the strife
Had come to seem accustomed as the undertone
of life;
We were fit and hard and happy, and the future
was unknown,
The past—all put behind us; but the present was
our own.

We were doing our plainest duty, meant to end
what we'd begun;

Why worry for tomorrow till today's big job
was done?

So we walked and laughed together like three
modern musketeers—

Defying indigestion and the Germans and the
years.

We were eating chip potatoes with our fingers,
like a tramp,

And the unseen owls were hooting in the trees
around the camp;

We were happy to be hungry, glad to be alive
and strong;

So—tomorrow might be terror, but tonight could
be a song!

CORP. W. KERSLEY HOLMES.

A WAIL FROM ORDNANCE

We're only in the Ordience,
Not troopers of the line;
We don't attack no enemy,
Nor in the papers shine.
We just wait here from morn till night,
Expectin' these 'ere shells
That makes our lives, what were so bright,
So many earthly 'ells.

We 'and out underpants and socks,
And boots and coats galore,
To them as gives and takes hard knocks
An' soon gets used to war.
We keep their clothing up to dick,
Equip and arm 'em, too;

We rig out the returning sick

Almost as good as new.

They blew us from our depot south

A bit along the beach,

We humped our blueys, nothing loath,

And settled out of reach.

Our store grew large and prosperous,

We laughed at Turk and Hun,

Until they trained on us one day

A blasted four-point-one.

Each morning they put in a few

To bring us from our beds,

From time to time the whole day through

They make us duck our heads.

One eye is cocked for cover,

And one ear for the whiz,

An', until the fuss is over, we

Postpone our daily biz.

Now, when the war is over,
And we return to peace,
Though we may live in clover,
Enjoying lives of ease—
A striking clock will wake us,
A blow-out make us run,
And cry again our old refrain:
“Gott straf’ that four-point-one!”

LIEUT. KININMOUTH, A.O.C.

THE RATION RASHER

"There always seems to be someone cooking bacon in the trenches."—Extract' from an Officer's letter.

A peculiar stench is the smell of the trench—
Of that there is no denying;
But at every post what strikes you most
Is the smell of bacon frying.

The moldy beef of some past relief,
I grant you, is somewhat trying;
But to counteract, you've always the fact
Of the smell of bacon frying.

At another time the chloride of lime
Will almost start you crying;

But banish the niff by having a sniff
At the smell of bacon frying.

The night has been wet and you see with regret
Odd garments hung out drying;
The odor is quaint, and you bless the saint
Who invented bacon frying.

It haunts you by night, and in daylight bright,
It will haunt you when you're dying;
That insidious smell that you know so well--
The smell of the bacon frying.

CAPT. C. W. BLACKALL.

PETER'S PUDDING

There came a pudding from Peter's people,
Round as the best of puddings are,
A fragrant spheroid of fruit and fatness,
Unannounced like a falling star,
Errant, excellent, edible star;
Directed to him came this beautiful ball,
Yet, certes, we scented a feast for us all.

It came at noon, when we had no leisure,
Only we sighed, "Were tea-time come!"
Oh, bear with us and our horrid hunger,
You who formally dine at home,
See a pudding per day at home;
And marvel what rarities puddings must be
Here, when one fashions a festival tea!

Till eve we toiled in the liveliest weather,
Out in the wind, the mud, and rain,
While hunger gathered, till day departing
Bugles called us to tea again—
Blew their jolliest summons again,
And then how we valued the pains Peter took
To keep on the sunniest side of the cook!

The pudding came to the crowded mess-tent,
Wrapped in a wreath of pleasant steam,
Substantial, solid, as puddings should be—
Fading swift as an idle dream,
Moment's doughy, digestible dream;
And then we went forth to what Fortune might
bring,

More fit by one pudding to fight for the King!

CORP. W. KERSLEY HOLMES.

LETTERS

(Vermelles, August, 1915)

When stand-to hour is over we leave the parapet,

And scamper to our dug-out to smoke a cigarette;

The post has brought in parcels and letters for us all,

And now we'll light a candle, a little penny candle,

A tiny tallow candle, and stick it to the wall.

Dark shadows cringe and cower on roof and wall and floor,

And little roving breezes come rustling through the door;

We open up the letters of friends across the
foam,

And thoughts go back to London, again we dream
of London—

We see the lights of London, of London and
of home.

We've parcels small and parcels of a quite gi-
gantic size,

We've Devon cream and butter and apples baked
in pies,

We'll make a night of feasting and all will have
their fill—

See, cot-mate Bill has dainties, such dandy dinky
dainties,

She's one to choose the dainties, the maid that's
gone on Bill.

Oh, Kensington for neatness; it packs its parcels
well,

Though Bow is always bulky it isn't quite as
swell.

But here there's no distinction 'twixt Kensing-
ton and Bow,

We're comrades in the dug-out, all equals in the
dug-out,

We're comrades in the dug-out and fight a com-
mon foe.

Here comes the ration party with tins of bully
stew—

“Clear off your ration party, we have no need of
you:

“Maconachie for breakfast? It ain't no bloomin'
use,

We're faring far, far better, our gifts from home
are better,

Look here, we've something better than bully
after Loos.”

The post comes trenchward nightly ; we hail the
post with glee,

Though now we're not as many as once we used
to be,

For some have done their fighting, packed up
and gone away,

And many boys are sleeping, no sound will break
their sleeping,

Brave, lusty comrades sleeping in little homes of
clay.

We all have read our letters, but one's untouched
so far,

An English maiden's letter to her sweetheart at
the War,

And when we write in answer to tell her how
he fell,

What can we say to cheer her? Oh, what is
now to cheer her?

There's nothing left to cheer her except the
news to tell.

We'll write to her tomorrow and this is what
we'll say,

He breathed her name in dying; in peace he
passed away—

No words about his moaning, his anguish and his
pain,

When slowly, slowly dying. God! Fifteen hours
in dying!

He lay a maimed thing dying, alone upon the
plain.

We often write to mothers, to sweethearts and
to wives,

And tell how those who loved them have given
up their lives;

If we're not always truthful, our lies are always
kind,

Our letters lie to cheer them, to solace and to
cheer them,

Oh! anything to cheer them,—the women left
behind.

PATRICK MACGILL.

NO MAN'S LAND

No Man's Land is an eerie sight
At early dawn in the pale gray light.
Never a house and never a hedge
In No Man's Land from edge to edge,
And never a living soul walks there
To taste the fresh of the morning air.
Only some lumps of rotting clay,
That were friends or foemen yesterday.

What are the bounds of No Man's Land?
You can see them clearly on either hand,
A mound of rag-bags gray in the sun,
Or a furrow of brown where the earthworks
run

From the Eastern hills to the Western sea,
Through field or forest o'er river and lea ;

No man may pass them, but aim you well
And Death rides across on the bullet or
shell.

But No Man's Land is a goblin sight
When patrols crawl over at dead o' night;
Boche or British, Belgian or French,
You dice with death when you cross the
trench.

When the "rapid," like fire-flies in the dark,
Flits down the parapet spark by spark,
And you drop for cover to keep your head
With your face on the breast of the four
months' dead.

The man who ranges in No Man's Land
Is dogged by the shadows on either hand
When the star-shell's flare, as it bursts o'er-
head,

Scares the great gray rats that feed on the
dead,

And the bursting bomb or the bayonet-snatch
May answer the click of your safety-catch.

For the lone patrol, with his life in his hand,

Is hunting for blood in No Man's Land.

CAPT. J. H. KNIGHT-ADKIN.

NIGHT IN THE TRENCHES

Star-shells rising all around us,
Watch the searchlights come this way,
Bullets whirring, zipping round us
From the rifles laid by day;
Pop, pop, pop, a Maxim tapping,
Just to show it's working right,
Lest its crew should be caught napping,
So they try it every night.
Out in front a hammer knocking,
Somebody is fixing "wire";
Hear the peewit sadly mocking;
Men in front now—Do not fire!
Working party just returning,
Digging finished for a while;
Stopped because a house was burning—

Through they pass in single file;
Strain your eyes to pierce the blackness,
Whilst your feet are growing numb,
Death may come through one man's slack-
ness—

Night and death together come.

ERIC THIRKELL COOPER.

LINES WRITTEN IN A FIRE-TRENCH

'Tis midnight, and above the hollow trench,
Seen through a gaunt wood's battle-blasted
trunks

And the stark rafters of a shattered grange,
The quiet sky hangs huge and thick with stars.
And through the vast gloom, murdering its peace,
Guns bellow and their shells rush swishing ere
They burst in death and thunder, or they fling
Wild jangling spirals round the screaming air.
Bullets whine by, and Maxims drub like drums,
And through the heaped confusion of all sounds
One great gun drives its single vibrant "Broum,"
And scarce five score of paces from the wall
Of piled sand-bags and barb-toothed nets of wire,
(So near and yet what thousand leagues away)

The unseen foe both adds and listens to
The selfsame discord, eyed by the same stars.
Deep darkness hides the desolated land,
Save where a sudden flare sails up and bursts
In whitest glare above the wilderness,
And for one instant lights with lurid pallor
The tense, packed faces in the black redoubt.

W. S. S. LYON.

*N. B. Written in fire-trench above "Glencorse
Wood," Westhoeck, April 11, 1915.*

A QUIET NIGHT

So lie you low, and watch the rise
Where the hedge runs down to the Broken
Tree;
There stands a farm that you cannot see,
And near the German culvert lies.
So ready ears, good men, and eyes
That waver not till starlight dies;
They gather stealthily.

Lie you, a bomb within the hand,
The rifle ready by the arm,
Touch but the wire to give alarm;
For our trench runs far in No Man's Land,
And it's lightly dug, and it's thinly manned,
And it's Death tonight, my little band,
If Germans take the farm.

RONALD GURNER.

IN NO MAN'S LAND WITH THE NIGHT PATROL

Five men over the parapet, with a one-star loot
in charge,

Stumbling along through the litter and muck and
cursing blind and large.

Hooking their gear in the clutching wire as they
wiggle through the gap,

For an hour's patrol in No Man's Land, and take
what chance may hap.

From Misery Farm to Seven Trees it's safe
enough to go,

But it's belly crawl down Dead Man's Ditch,
half choked with grimy snow.

Then back again beside the grass grown road—
Watch out! They've got it set!

To where B company's listening post lies shivering in the wet.

And I have failed at many a task, but this one thing I've learned:—

It's the little things make paradise—like three hours' doss well earned,

A fire of coke in a battered pail, and a gulp of ration rum,

Or a gobbled meal of bully and mud, with the guns for a moment dumb.

And horror's not from terrible things—men torn to rags by a shell,

And the whole trench swimming in blood and slush, like a butcher's shop in hell;

It's silence and night and the smell of the dead that shake a man to the soul,

From Misery Farm to Dead Man's Ditch on a "nil report" patrol.

Five men back to the trench again, with a one-
star loot in charge,

Stumbling over the rusty tins and cursing blind
and large.

Enter the trench log up to date by a guttering
candle's flare!

"No report" (save that hell is dark, and we have
just been there).

CAPT. J. H. KNIGHT-ADKIN.

BEFORE THE CHARGE

(*Loos, 1915*)

The night is still and the air is keen,
Tense with menace the time crawls by,
In front is the town and its homes are seen,
Blurred in outline against the sky.

The dead leaves float in the sighing air,
The darkness moves like a curtain drawn,
A veil which the morning sun will tear
From the face of death. We charge at dawn.

PATRICK MACGILL.

NEUVE CHAPELLE

The Morning Star is fading from our sight
Above the miry trench we know so well,
Facing a clustered group of houses white,
Neuve Chapelle.

Suddenly through the palpitating air
Descends a thunderstorm of shot and shell
Upon the village calmly sleeping there,
Neuve Chapelle

The tempest grows, like a tornado's gust
Or countless fiends let loose at once from hell;
It maddens men, and shatters into dust
Neuve Chapelle.

Ceases awhile the cannon's deafening crash;
Forth, at the whistle, with a jubilant yell

Khaki-clad warriors leap ; 'gainst thee they dash,
Neuve Chapelle.

They hurl them on the crowded trench below,
With courage that no fear of death can quell ;
Their bayonets heap thy pavements with the foe,
Neuve Chapelle.

A thousand graves shall mark the fatal place
Where the English, Scottish, Teuton heroes fell ;
Hushed in their fury in thy cold embrace,
Neuve Chapelle.

Long in the memory of Britain's wives
The story of this ghastly day shall dwell ;
Long shall we mourn those young and gallant
lives,
Neuve Chapelle.

H. A. NESBITT, M.A.

April, 1915.

IN THE MORNING .

(*Loos, 1915*)

The firefly haunts were lighted yet,
As we scaled the top of the parapet;
But the East grew pale to another fire,
As our bayonets gleamed by the foeman's
wire;

And the sky was tinged with gold and gray,
And under our feet the dead men lay,
Stiff by the loop-holed barricade;
Food of the bomb and the hand-grenade;
Still in the slushy pool and mud—
Ah! the path we came was a path of blood,
When we went to Loos in the morning.

A little gray church at the foot of a hill,
With powdered glass on the window-sill.

The shell-scarred stone and the broken tile,
Littered the chancel, nave and aisle—
Broken the altar and smashed the pyx,
And the rubble covered the crucifix;
This we saw when the charge was done,
And the gas-clouds paled in the rising sun,
As we entered Loos in the morning.

The dead men lay on the shell-scarred plain,
Where Death and the Autumn held their
reign—

Like banded ghosts in the heavens gray
The smoke of the powder paled away;
Where riven and rent the spinney trees
Shivered and shook in the sullen breeze,
And there, where the trench through the
graveyard wound,
The dead men's bones stuck over the ground
By the road to Loos in the morning.

The turret towers that stood in the air,
Sheltered a foeman sniper there—
They found, who fell in the sniper's aim,
A field of death on the field of fame;
And stiff in khaki the boys were laid
To the sniper's toll at the barricade,
But the quick went clattering through the
town,
Shot at the sniper and brought him down,
As we entered Loos in the morning.

The dead men lay on the cellar stair,
Toll of the bomb that found them there,
In the street men fell as a bullock drops,
Sniped from the fringe of Hulluch copse.
And the choking fumes of the deadly shell
Curtained the place where our comrades
fell,
This we saw when the charge was done,

And the East blushed red to the rising sun
In the town of Loos in the morning.

PATRICK MACGILL.

CIVILIZATION

*"God's in His Heaven,
All's right with the world."*

—Browning.

There's a roar like a thousand hells set free,
And the riven, tortured ground
Sways like a tempest-smitten tree;
And the earth shoots up in jets all round
And blows like spray at sea
When the wild white horses chafe and fret
Till the boulders back on the beach are wet
With the far-flung foam. But the hollow sound
Of the waves that roar on the shifting shore
Would be lost and drowned in the furious din,
When these fruits of man's great brain begin
To pound the ditch that we are in.

The trench is soon a hideous mess
Of yawning holes and scattered mud
And tangled wire and splintered wood,
And some poor shapeless things you'd guess
Were once made up of nerves and blood,
But now are no more good
Than the tattered sandbags—nay, far less,
For these can still be used again.
(Heed not the dark-red stain,
For that will quickly disappear
In the sun and wind and rain.)
Above our heads—not very high,
As they fall on the German trenches near—
Our own shells hurtle wailing by,
But the noise cannot deaden the dreadful cry
Of a soul torn out of the shattered form;
(While those who are still survivors try
Like a ship—any port in a storm)
To hide in the holes the shells have made

And blindly, grimly, wait
Till the storm of shot and shell abate,
And it's "Bayonets up!" and blade to blade,
We can strike for ourselves, and the brave dead
 boys,
Who, hiding in holes, have met their fate
Like rats in a trap;
But we perhaps shall have better hap,
For already there is less of the awful noise,
We can hear the machine guns stuttering death.
They're coming at last! And we draw our breath
Through hard-clenched teeth, as our bullets fly
Toward the serried ranks that are drawing nigh;
They stagger and fall, but still press on
To the goal they think they have nearly won.
And we wait and wait till they're almost here,
Then it's "Up, lads! Up! Let 'em have the steel!"
With a wild, hoarse yell that is half a cheer,
We are out and their torn ranks backwards reel.

Then back to the trench to bury and build,
And count our wounded and count our killed ;
But out in the front there are many who lie,
Their dead eyes turned to the quiet sky—
We have given our own lads company.

LIEUT. ERIC FITZWATER WILKINSON, M.C.

(Killed in action, 1917)

“ATTACK!”

You are standing watch in hand,
All waiting the command,
While your guns have got their trenches fairly
set.

When they lengthen up the range,
You feel a trifle strange
As you clamber up the sand-bag parapet.

It's a case of do or die—
Still, you rather wonder why
Your mate drops down beside you with a
screech;

But you're very soon aware,
When a bullet parts your hair,
That HE'S not the only pebble on the beach.

It's each man for himself,
For your Captain's on the shelf,
And you don't know if he's wounded or he's dead.
So never count the cost,
Or your comrades who are lost,
But keep the line on forging straight ahead.

The high-explosive shell
Has blown their wire to hell,
And their trench is like a muddy, bloody drain.
They are bolting left and right,
And the few that stay to fight—
Well, not many see their Fatherland again!

But there's one cove that you've missed,
And he cops you in the wrist
As you're stooping down to help a wounded
chum.
Though you're feeling mighty faint,

And you're not a blooming saint,
You blow his blasted brains to kingdom come!

You've done your little job,
And you drop down with a sob,
For you're feeling half a man and half a wreck.
And you say a little prayer—
Which for you is rather rare—
For you got it in the arm, and not the neck.

When the evening shadows fall,
You do your best to crawl,
Till the stretcher-bearers find you in a creek.
Then you feel as right as rain,
And forget the aching pain,
For you'll see Old England's shores within a
week.

CAPT. C. W. BLACKALL.

THE NIGHT ATTACK

Close behind a wall of sandbags, covered up with
yellow mud,
In a trench that seems perpetually wet,
Stands a line of weary figures, all begrimed with
dirt and blood,
And their tired faces grimly stern and set;
With their rifles "laid" and ready for the night
that's coming soon,
They gather round the braziers for tea,
Whilst the subaltern lies resting who's in charge
of the platoon,
Preparing for the night that is to be.
When the rifle bolts are tested, and the sentries
have been set,
When the night is only lightened by the flares,

He leads a little party through the darkness,
black as jet,
And creeps to catch the Deutschers unawares.

With the fuse attached beforehand on the im-
provised grenade,
They slowly crawl towards the German wire,
And a few went softly cursing, and a few there
were that prayed,
Whilst they waited there for Fritz to open fire.

Then they cut the wire in places, and a bomb
was swiftly hurled,
A Maxim farther down began to pop;
And a little knot of Prussians went to find an-
other world,
As another bomb went spinning overtop;
Down the trench the rifles volleyed, though they
mostly went too high,

But here and there a figure lay and cursed,
Yet only very softly, so as not to signify,
And a second line of shadows joined the first.
Quickly star shells flew around them, bursting
 brilliant as the sun,
A yelling line found where the gap was blown;
Scarlet bayonets quickly finished what a dead
 man had begun;
And next day some widowed women wept alone.

ERIC THIRKELL COOPER.

THE VETERAN

Well, boy, you're off to war.

I'd go again myself

If I was fit. Just reach my sword

From off that dusty shelf.

Ah, thanks! The thrill it carries!

This battered hilt to hold.

I'm mutilated, boy, but still

I'm far from being old.

Just think, a scant eight months ago

I left here strong and tall,

And with my Briton brothers

Threw in my lot, my all.

Just eight short months, but in that time

I've lived a tragic life,

And seen my fill of hate and flame
And death in callous strife.

Eight months ago I used to dream
Of glory's honored crown;
Eight months, and in that hasting time
My idols tumbled down.
I dreamt the thrill of battle;
The roaring charge; the check;
I never thought that I'd return
A battered, useless wreck.

Oh, I was but a driftwood in
The backwash of a corps.
I've suffered and I've risked my life,—
That's what I 'nlisted for.
And were I hale and hearty
I'd do the same again,
And take my place among the ranks
Of Britain's fighting men.

What, youngster? Tell about my wounds?

There's nothing much to say.

The first was in the village—

We captured it that day—

I got a bullet in the breast.

Unconsciously for hours

I lay just where I tumbled

Drenched thro' with chilling showers.

To get me to the ambulance

The bearers had to creep.

A doctor tended me who looked

Half dead for want of sleep.

They'd run quite out of medicine;

Few orderlies beside,

And those of us who wanted to

Might live—the others died.

I needed life so much, I guess

I fought the angel back.

It's funny how you hate to die,
When lying on your back.
They patched me up, eventually;
Back to the lines I went,—
Back to the freezing trench; 'twas then
I knew what suff'ring meant.

The cutting wind nipped to the bone,
The rifle froze the hand,
And all day long the shrapnel searched
The frost-encrusted land.
To face a madly charging foe
Demands a courage bold,
But more than that is needed to
Combat insistent cold.

One day we found a French platoon;
No wound—no blood was shed;
The poison-gas had done its work;

The whole platoon was dead.
I remember cogitating
As among that group I stood,
"If hell is anything like war,
Thank God! my life's been good."

But go, my boy! Off to the front,
And let no tongue dissuade.
Go, for war's proficiency,
With rifle and with spade.
God speed you, boy! I envy you,
As chained to a wooden peg,
I, crippled, sit with a broken life,
One hand, and half a leg.

SERGT. FRANK S. BROWN.

WOUNDED

Is it not strange? A year ago today,
With scarce a thought beyond the humdrum
 round,
I did my decent job and earned my pay;
Was averagely happy, I'll be bound.
Ay, in my little groove I was content,
Seeing my life run smoothly to the end,
With prosy days in stolid labor spent,
And jolly nights, a pipe, a glass, a friend.
In God's good time a hearth fire's cozy gleam,
A wife and kids, and all a fellow needs;
When presto! like a bubble goes my dream:
I leap upon the stage of Splendid Deeds.
I yell with rage; I wallow deep in gore:
I, that was clerk in a drysalter's store.

Stranger than any book I've ever read.
Here on the reeking battlefield I lie,
Under the stars, propped up with smeary dead
Like too if no one takes me in, to die.
Hit on the arms, legs, liver, lungs and gall;
Damn glad there's nothing more of me to hit;
But calm, and never feeling pain at all,
And full of wonder at the turn of it.
For of the dead around me three are mine,
Three foemen vanquished in the whirl of fight;
So if I die I have no right to whine,
I feel I've done my little bit all right.
I don't know how—but there the beggars are,
As dead as herrings pickled in a jar.

And here am I, worse wounded than I thought;
For in the fight a bullet bee-like stings;
You never heed; the air is metal-hot,
And all alive with little flicking wings.

But on you charge. You see the fellows fall;
Your pal was by your side, fair fighting-mad;
You turn to him, and lo! no pal at all;
You wonder vaguely if he's copped it bad.

But on you charge. The heavens vomit death;
And vicious death is besoming the ground.
You're blind with sweat; you're dazed, and out
of breath,

And though you yell, you cannot hear a sound.
But on you charge. Oh, War's a rousing game!
Around you smoky clouds like ogres tower;
The earth is roweled deep with spurs of flame,
And on your helmet stones and ashes shower.
But on you charge. It's odd! You have no fear.
Machine-gun bullets whip and lash your path;
Red, yellow, black and smoky giants rear;
The shrapnel rips, the heavens roar in wrath.
But on you charge. Barbed wire all trampled
down.

The ground all gored and rent as by a blast;
Grim heaps of gray where once were heaps of
brown;

A ragged ditch—the Hun first line at last.
All smashed to hell. Their second right ahead,
So on you charge. There's nothing else to do.
More reeking holes, blood, barbed wire, grue-
some dead;

(Your puttee strap's undone—that worries you),
You glare around. You think you're all alone,
But no; your chums come surging left and right.
The nearest chap flops down without a groan,
His face still snarling with the rage of fight.

Ha! here's the second trench—just like the first,
Only a little more so, more "laid out";

More pounded, flame-corroded, death-accurst;
A pretty piece of work, beyond a doubt.

Now for the third, and there your job is done.
So on you charge. You never stop to think.

Your cursed puttee's trailing as you run;
You feel you'd sell your soul to have a drink.
The acrid air is full of cracking whips.
You wonder how it is you're going still.
You foam with rage. Oh, God! to be at grips
With someone you can rush and crush and kill.
Your sleeve is dripping blood; you're seeing red;
You're battle-mad; your turn is coming now.
See! there's the jagged barbed wire straight
 ahead,
And there's the trench—you'll get there anyhow.
Your puttee catches on a strand of wire,
And down you go; perhaps it saves your life,
For over sandbag rims you see 'em fire,
Crop-headed chaps, their eyes ablaze with strife.
You crawl, you cower; then once again you
 plunge
With all your comrades roaring at your heels.
"Have at 'em, lads." You stab, you jab, you
 lunge;

A blaze of glory, then the red world reels.
A crash of triumph, then . . . you're faint a
bit . . .

That cursed puttee! Now to fasten it . . .

Well, that's the charge. And now I'm here alone.
I've built a little wall of Hun on Hun,
To shield me from the leaden bees that drone
(It saves me worry, and it hurts 'em none).
The only thing I'm wondering is when
Some stretcher-men will stroll along my way?
It isn't much that's left of me, but then
Where life is, hope is, so at least they say.
Well, if I'm spared I'll be the happy lad.
I tell you I won't envy any king.
I've stood the racket, and I'm proud and glad;
I've had my crowning hour. Oh, War's the
thing!
It gives us common working chaps our chance,
A taste of glory, chivalry, romance.

Ay, War, they say, is hell; it's heaven, too,
It lets a man discover what he's worth.
It takes his measure, shows what he can do,
Gives him a joy like nothing else on earth.
It fans in him a flame that otherwise
Would flicker out, these drab, discordant days;
It teaches him in pain and sacrifice
Faith, fortitude, grim courage past all praise.
Yes, War is good. So here beside my slain,
A happy wreck I wait amid the din;
For even if I perish, mine's the gain. . . .
Hi, there, you fellows! Won't you take me in?
Give me a fag to smoke upon the way. . . .
We've taken La Boisselle! The hell, you say!
Well, that would make a corpse sit up and
 grin. . . .
Lead on! I'll live to fight another day.

ROBERT W. SERVICE.

GLORY

We had a little set-back
In the tricky shadow light
Between the day and the darkness
There had been a stubborn fight,
When the last rays of the sun
Picked out in deep-cut silhouette
A stranded Maxim gun.

Our Captain spotted it and turned:
His voice rang like a bell
Amid the hurricane of sound—
“Five volunteers for hell!”
The nearest five howled, “Here, sir!”
Above the awful din,
Then slipped out in the twilight
To bring that Maxim in.

So, while we hustled cartridge clips,
Or pumped our magazines,
We snatched the time to follow
Those five fire-eating fiends.
The first just turned and crumpled up—
His ghastly features set—
A German had him spotted when
He climbed the parapet.

The second kept on crawling, till
He met some flying lead
That ripped away his cap and left
A deep gash in his head;
The third was going lucky, till
He topped the little rise,
Then turned to us and wilted—
On his face a fixed surprise.

The others, scouting trouble, took
The open on the run;

Unscathed they crossed the death zone,
And reached the precious gun;
Then, taking it between them, turned
Back to our hiding place:
They'd covered half the distance, when
The fourth pitched on his face.

When the last man reached the trenches
He contained a pound of lead;
He got the most when he paused and stooped
To see if the fourth was dead.
Now this lad got a medal
To pin upon his breast,
And a whacking lot of glory, too;
But what about the rest?

One of the men came crawling back—
He was the first to fall—
But the surgeon could not save him:

He died in the hospital.

It was hours before the stretchers
Could leave the trench to tend
The wounded. In the meantime
The third had met his end.

The second man recovered,
But the price he paid was high—
Stone blind, a bullet in the lung,
One leg bobbed at the thigh.
And this was the price of glory,
This the just reward:
How many of these were heroes,
Think you, in the sight of the Lord?

Just one got the cross for valor,
And one the sufferer's cross;
Three lives went out in the twilight,
Yet none account their loss.
For every deed rewarded—

For every laurel crown—
Unknown, unsung, forgotten
A hundred lives go down.

Then in the final reck'ning
Share with the ones unknown
The glory; give not the living
The bread—to the dead a stone.
But honor the sacred mem'ry
Of those who for honor tried—
Men of stupendous valor,
Unknown because they died.

SERGEANT FRANK S. BROWN.

HOLDING THE BRIDGE

Night after night, day after day,
We fought and backed and fought away;
Until, after a hundred knocks,
They thought they had us on the rocks,
Behind our force, a river ran—
A single bridge its water span—
If they could gain that bridge's head
We'd all be prisoners or dead.
I never was in tighter place,
Or ever ran a closer race.
We both ceased fire, and made a burst;
But thank the Lord! we got there first.
And though our ranks with lead they pound,
Yet like grim death we held our ground,
And making little of our loss

Until the last man got across.
And there, two hundred yards away,
Nine sapper-men in ambush lay.

We knew it was their biz to blow
The bloomin' bridge to Jericho,
But saw that there was summat wrong,
Because the job, it took too long:
Either the fuse had failed to fire,
Or else a shot had cut the wire.
There was but one thing to be done—
Back to the blasted bridge to run.
They tried it, too, those Sappers nine,
For they were bound to fire that mine.

The Captain first with cigarette
Between his lips, his teeth firm set,
Strolled quietly across the ridge
Towards the buttress of the bridge,

And then turned back again, and talked
To his own men, then on he walked
As cool as if he was on parade.
My God! he drew a fusillade,
Yet on he went. We gave a cheer
To see a man so free from fear;
But we the words had hardly spoke,
When right in's face a shell it broke:
'Twas one of Krupps' brand-new machines,
And blew him into smithereens.

Then the Lieutenant, all on fire
To win his spurs, and fix that wire,
Walked out; you'd think it was a race,
He went at such a clinking pace,
Fair toe and heel. They hold their fire
Till he is close beside the wire,
And then the fatal word they give,
And riddle him just like a sieve.

He hadn't time a prayer to say;
I wonder if it mattered—eh?

And next the Sergeant had his try
He didn't seem the least bit shy,
He didn't dodge, he didn't duck,
But marched straight on till he was struck.
He didn't lie down like a lamb,
But died, God bless him! shouting "Damn!"

Then one with two stripes, two with one,
Then three without like red shanks run.
But one and all of them were copped,
And down upon the race-course dropped;
And we were done, as nigh's could be,
For that left only one, you see.

And he was cute as a pet fox,
He didn't step out of his box,

But squatted till the Klucking Hen,
Thinking all safe, sent on his men;
Then stripped his body to his pelt,
And drawing tighter in his belt,
And pulling himself close together,
He raced all out, just hell for leather,
Straight for the bridge. Oh! it was prime!
Clocking the course in even time.

The German bullets round him spin
As thick as hail, they shaved his chin,
They drew a tooth, they singed his hair,
They cut his nails, Gawdstrewth, I swear.

No sharpshooter could draw a bead
On one with such a turn of speed:
For all our lives it was a race
Across that open gun-swept space,
Both armies breathless looking on.
But bless his heart! our Sapper won.

He was a daisy—that's no flattery:
He waited till a German battery
Was on the bridge; and then he pressed
The button of his bomb. I'm blessed!
But with a fizz, a bang, a flare,
Up went the bridge into the air,
With gun and horse and Bombardier.
From out our ranks a mighty cheer,
That almost drowned the guns, arose:
To hear the row you might suppose
It was a match; and we had kicked
The winning goal, and Albion licked.

ARNOLD F. GRAVES.

NEXT MORNING

I

Today the sun shines bright,
There is a delicate freshness in the air,
Which, like a nimble sprite,
Doth play upon my cheek and lift my hair.
And, as I look about me, lo!
I see a world I do not know!
As though some soft celestial beam,
Some clean and wholesome grace,
Had purged half the horror of the place
To a strange beauty. Was it, then, a dream,
That ghostly march but yesternight,
Beneath the moon's uncertain light,
When chill at heart we picked our way
Through dreadful, silent things, that lay

About our path on either hand?

Was it a dream? Is this the self-same land,

The land we pass'd through then?

How strange it seems!—Yet 'tis the same!

I see from here the path by which we came,

The tumbled soil, the shatter'd trees are there:

And there, in desolation sleeping,

Almost too pitiful for weeping,

The little village—once the home of men!

Aye, the whole scene is there,

As desperate in its abandonment,

As melancholy-wild and savage-bare

As then:—but somehow in this warm, bright air

It all seems different!

The same, and yet I know it not!

II

Thus much I see—*But there's a spot*

That's hidden from mine eyes.

Behind the ruin'd church it lies,

*Where gaping vaults, beneath the nave,
Have made a dreadful kind of cave;
And there before the cavern's mouth
A dark and stagnant pool is spread,
So silent and so still!*

*I saw it last i' the pale moonlight;
And I could think that shapes uncouth
Crept from that cave at dead of night
With ghoulish stealth, to feast their fill
Upon the pale and huddled dead!*

Yet now,

Happy, beneath this warm sunlight,
Even that fearsome pool is bright
Under the cavern's brow!

So outward-fair, that few might guess
The secret of its loathsomeness,
Nor know what nameless things are done
There, with the setting of the sun!

LIEUT. E. A. WODEHOUSE.

AT DAWN IN FRANCE

Night on the plains, and the stars unfold
The cycle of night in splendor old;
The winds are hushed, on the fire-swept hill
All is silent, shadowy, still—
Silent, yet tense as a harp high-strung
By a master hand for deeds unsung.
Slowly across the shadowy night
Tremble the shimmering wings of light,
And men with vigil in their eyes
And a fever light that never dies—
Men from the city, hamlet, town,
Once white faces tanned to brown,—
Stand to the watch of the parapet
And watch, with rifles, bayonets set,
For the great unknown that comes to men
Swift as the light: sudden, then—

Dawn! the light from its shimmering wings
Lights up their faces with strange, strange
things:

Strange thoughts of love, of death and life,
Serenity 'mid sanguine strife,—
Dreams of life where the feet of youth
Rush to the pinnacles of Truth;
Where early dreams with pinions fleet
Rush to find a love complete;
Of Love and Youth 'neath rosy bowers
Sensuous, mad, with the wine-filled hours,
Flushed with hope and joy's delight,
Weaving rapture from the night:—
Visions of death where the harp is still
And the sun sets swiftly behind youth's hill;
Where the song is hushed and the light is dead
And the man lies with the remembered;
Where Memory weaves a paradise,
A mother's face, her tender eyes,
Her suffering for the child she gave,

Her love unbroken by the grave;
Where shadows gather o'er the bliss,
The rapture of a bridal kiss:—
Yet dreams where Youth (sublimity!)
Doth thrill to give for Liberty
Its love, its hope, its radiant morn,
Doth thrill to die for the yet unborn,
To die and pay the utmost price
And save its ideals thro' the sacrifice.

Thus at dawn do the watchers dream;
Of life and death, of love supreme:
Flushed with the dawn, hope in each breast
Their faces turn to the starless west:
Thus at dawn do the watchers think
Resolute-hearted upon death's brink
With a strange, proud look on every face——
The SCORN of Death, the PRIDE of race.

SERGT. J. W. STREETS.

(Killed in action, July 1, 1916)

LINES WRITTEN SOMEWHERE IN THE
NORTH SEA

The laggard hours drift slowly by; while silver
mist-wreaths veil the sky

And iron coast whereon, flung high, the North
Sea breaks in foam.

When flame the pallid Northern Lights on seem-
ing age-long Winter nights,

Then oftentimes for our delight God sends a
dream of Home.

And once again we know the peace of little red-
roofed villages

That nestle close in some deep crease amid the
rolling wealds

That Northward, Eastward, Southward sweep,
fragrant with thyme and flecked with sheep,

To where the corn is standing deep above the
ripening fields.

And once again in that fair dream I see the
sibilant swift stream—

Now gloomy—green and now a gleam—that flows
by Furnace Mill,

And hear the plover's plaintive cry above the
common at Holtye,

When redly glows the dusky sky and all the
woods are still.

Oh, I remember as of old, the copse aflame with
russet gold,

The sweet half-rotten scent of mold, the while
I stand and hark

To unseen woodland life that stirs before the
clamant gamekeepers,

Till, sudden, out a pheasant whirrs to cries of
"Mark cock, mark!"

And there are aged inns that sell the mellow,
cool October ale,
What time one tells an oft-told tale around the
friendly fires,
Until the clock with muffled chime asserts that
it is closing time,
And o'er the fields now white with rime the
company retires.

How long ago and far it seems, this peaceful
country of our dreams,
Of fruitful fields and purling streams—the Eng-
land that we know:
Who holds within her sea-girt ring all that we
love, and love can bring;
Ah, Life were but a little thing to give to keep
her so!

LIEUT. N. M. F. CORBETT, R. N.

BALLADE OF A 'CATHEDRAL CLOSE

Before me on the crown
Of yonder hilltop high
The stark howitzers frown
Remorseless cruelty.
A sullen shell screams by——
I heed not how it goes,
Seeing in memory
The old Cathedral close.

The elm leaves flutter down
And round the wet lawns fly
In tawny eddies blown
Which mar their greenery.
A pearly-tinted sky
The naked boughs disclose,

And bare to every eye

The old Cathedral close.

The clamors of the town

Come faint as dark winds sigh,

Nor can avail to drown

Its sweet tranquillity.

Each mellowing century

Has sweetened its repose;

No strife has e'er come nigh

The old Cathedral close.

ENVOIE

So I must still defy

The menace of our foes,

And save, if I should die,

The old Cathedral close.

LIEUT. C. A. MACARTNEY.

WHEN I COME HOME

When I come home, dear folk o' mine,
We'll drink a cup of olden wine;
And yet, however rich it be,
No wine will taste so good to me
As English air. How I shall thrill
To drink it on Hampstead Hill

When I come home!

When I come home, and leave behind
Dark things I would not call to mind,
I'll taste good ale and home-made bread,
And see white sheets and pillows spread.
And there is one who'll softly creep
To kiss me, ere I fall asleep,

And tuck me 'neath the counterpane,
And I shall be a boy again

When I come home!

When I come home, from dark to light,
And tread the roadways long and white,
And tramp the lanes I tramped of yore,
And see the village greens once more,
The tranquil farms, the meadows free,
The friendly trees that nod to me,
And hear the lark beneath the sun,
'Twill be good pay for what I've done,
When I come home!

LESLIE COULSON.

(Killed in action, Oct. 7, 1916)

A LARK ABOVE THE TRENCHES

Hushed is the shriek of hurtling shells : and hark !
Somewhere within that bit of deep blue sky,
Grand in his loneliness, his ecstasy,
His lyric wild and free, carols a lark.
I in the trench, he lost in heaven afar ;
I dream of love, its ecstasy he sings ;
Both lure my soul to love till, like a star,
It flashes into life : O tireless wings
That beat love's message into melody—
A song that touches in the place remote
Gladness supreme in its undying note,
And stirs to life the soul of memory—
'Tis strange that while you're beating into life
Men here below are plunged in sanguine strife.

SERGT. JOHN WILLIAM STREETS.

FOUR RYE SHEAVES

Four rye sheaves to be my bed;
“Now God me save,” was the prayer I said;

And sweet was the sleep that came to me,
For I was home where I fain would be;

And sweet was the dream that sleep did yield,
A flowering bank, and a daisied field;

A lovers’ lane, and a winsome maid—
But I never heard the word she said;

I never heard what word she spoke,
For the bugle was blown and I awoke.

.

Four rye sheaves to be my bed—

But where this night may I lay my head?

Four rye sheaves to be my bed—

Will she come with that word if I am dead?

SERGT. JOSEPH LEE.

BROWN EYES

Song

Oh, two brown eyes where love-lit shadows swim
Like pools asleep and lulled by evening's hymn.
How can such two brown lustrous eyes
Disturb my dreams with dreams of warmer
 skies,
Of singing birds and scented flowers of spring,
And sounds of Austral's bushlands whispering?
Ah, I forget the miles of heaving sea
That distance flings 'twixt love and me
 And two brown eyes.

FRANK E. WESTBROOK.

HILL 60

As some far swimmer, turning, views once more
England's white cliffs, and strongly cleaves
t'ward shore,

But, tide-encumbered, faints; so far and dear
Thy crystal arms and pillared throat appear,
Love, to thy soldier who makes earth his bed
In this gray catacomb of unnamed dead.

Thy voice, o'er tossing seas of eves and dawns,
Comes like dim music heard on magic lawns;
And, when in prayer thou kneelest, this grim
brow

Feels the cool benison of hands which thou
Wouldst often grant. Now know I 'twas not
vain

Our love, whose memory softens present pain.

C. J. N. (A.N.Z.A.C.)

• ENVOY

Only if I am remembered,
 Only remembered of you,
I shall not fret if the rest forget
The vows they vowed when their spirits met,
 With mine in a bondage new:
Dead be the fire of their first desire,
 All their roses be rue,—
Only if I am remembered,
 Only remembered of you.

Only if I am remembered,
 Only remembered of you,
I shall be strong, tho' the years be long,
Tho' the road be red with the wounds of wrong,
 And the sky bare never its blue:

Spring of delight in the blast and blight,

Love shall be treasured as true,—

Only if I am remembered,

Only remembered of you.

CAPT. V. E. STEWART, M.C.

TO SISTER E. W.

You gave me a white carnation :
Was it in sympathy?
And did you know the flower meant
Youth's glad world to me?

A simple white carnation,
Yet you seemed to understand
What I craved was a woman's smile,
The touch of a gentle hand.

So you gave me a white carnation—
'Twas a foolish thing to do,
For whenever I see carnations now
I shall always think of you.

H. SMALLEY SARSON.

THE BOYS OUT THERE

I meet with the boys and the gay toasts pass,
The sparkling wine and the cheerful glass,
The long gray nights and the blazing log,
The clinging folds of the misty fog,
The comforts of homeland everywhere—
I think of the boys who are still out there.

Out there knee-deep in the slush and mud,
Splashed and mingled with comrades' blood,
Bearing the burden of those who lag
And fear to follow the dear old flag.
Sunset's gray with the tint of care,
For millions are thinking of those out there.

On earth goodwill and peace to men.
It sounds like a hollow mockery when

I mark the horrors my eyes have seen
(They can never know who have never been),
War stripped of its glittering glamour bare—
They see it naked, the boys out there.

They are fighting a sordid war, where trench
And traverse is full of a noisome stench;
There's little of berserk warrior lust,
It's wait and suffer while bayonets rust.
It's easy to dream in an easy-chair,
But I dream and I pray for the boys out there.

Out there, wherever "out there" may be,
From Belgium's ruins to farthest sea,
Wherever the Union Jack still flies,
Flaunting its pride to the shot-torn skies.
For them our tenderest loving care—
God prosper the boys who are still out there.

FRANK E. WESTBROOK.

Epsom, Xmas, 1915.

THE CHOICE

I'd rather clean a bayonet from the scarlet stain
upon it,
And feel that I was helping as I should,
Than be widely celebrated as the author of a
sonnet,
Supposing for an instant that I could.

Might I choose between the making of a sorely-
needed shell,
And painting some great masterpiece of art,
I'd rather work at Woolwich—and I'd try to do
it well.
That seems to be by far the finer part.

For the time has come for doing, and it's better
nowadays
To die unknown, unhonored, undismayed,

Than to live in selfish comfort ; just a man who
hip-hurrays,

The reckoning that other men have paid.

ERIC THIRKELL COOPER.

TOMMY AND FRITZ

He hides behind his sand-bag,
And I stand back o' mine ;
And sometimes he bellows, "Hullo, John Bull!"
And I hollers, "German swine!"
And sometimes we both lose our bloomin' rag,
And blaze all along the line.

Sometimes he whistles his 'Ymn of 'Ate,
Or opens his mug to sing,
And when he gives us "Die Wacht am Rhein"
I give 'im "God Save the King";
And then—we "get up the wind" again,
And the bullets begin to ping—
(If we're in luck our machine gun nips
A working squad on the wing.)

Sometimes he shouts, "Tommy, come over!"
And we fellers bawl out, "Fritz,
If yer wants a good warm breakfast,
Walk up and we'll give you fits!"
And sometimes our great guns begin to growl,
And blows his front line to bits.

And when our shrapnel has tore his wire,
And his parapet shows a rent,
We over and pays him a friendly call
With a bayonet—but no harm meant.
And he—well, when he's resuscitate,
He returns us the compliment!

I stand behind my sand-bag,
And he hides back o' his'en;
And, but for our bloomin' uniforms,
We might both be convicts in pris'n;
And sometimes I loves him a little bit—
And sometimes I 'ate like p'ison.

For sometimes I mutters "Belgium,"
Or "*Lusitani-a*,"
And I slackens my bay'net in its sheath,
And stiffens my lower jaw,
And "An eye for an eye; a tooth for a tooth,"
Is all I know of the Law.

But sometimes when things is quiet,
And the old kindly stars come out,
I stand up behind my sand-bag,
And think, "What's it all about?"
And—tho' I'm a damned sight better nor him,
Yet sometimes I have a doubt,
That if you got under his hide you would see
A bloke with a heart just the same's you and me!

SERGT. JOSEPH LEE.

REFLECTIONS ON THE EVACUATION

Once more sits Mahomet by Helles' marges
And smokes with ease among his cypress-trees,
Nor snipes from scrubberies at British targes
Nor views them wallowing in sacred seas,
But cleans his side arms and is pleased to prattle
Of that great morning when he woke and heard
That in his slumbers he had fought a battle,
A bloody battle, and a little bird
Piped (in the German) at his side, and said,
"The something infidels have been and fled."

Cautious he crept from out his mountain-ditches,
Down the long gully, past the Water Towers;
By Backhouse Point he nosed among the niches,
But they were hushed, and innocent of Giaours;

Still fearful found the earthly homes we haunted,
Those thirsty stretches where the rest-camps
were,

Then the sea slunk on, a trifle daunted
By wreathed wires and every sort of snare,
And came at last, incredulous, to find
The very beach all blasphemously mined.

Now on each hand he eyes our impious labels,
Bond Street and Regent Street, those weary
ways;

Here stands the Pink Farm, with the broken
gables,

Here Oxford Circus marks a winding maze;
But most, I ween, in scarred grave-ridden re-
gions,

O'er many a battle-scene he loves to brood,
How Allah here was gracious to his legions,
How here, again, he was not quite so good,

Here by the Brown House, when the bombs began,

And they—I whisper it—they turned and ran.

And we shall no more see the great ships gather,
Nor hear their thunderings on days of state,
Nor toil from trenches in an honest lather
To magic swimmings in a perfect Strait;
Nor sip Greek wine and see the slow sun dropping

On gorgeous evenings over Imbrose Isle,
While up the hill the Maxim will keep popping,
And the men sing, and camp-fires wink awhile
And in the scrub the glow-worms glow like stars,
But (hopeless creatures) will not light cigars;

Nor daylong linger in our delv'd lodges,
And fight for food with fifty thousand flies,
Too sick and sore to be afraid of "proj's,"
Too dazed with dust to see the turquoise skies;

Nor walk at even by the busy beaches,
Or quiet cliff-paths where the Indians pray,
And see the sweepers in the sky-blue reaches
Of Troy's own water, where the Greek ships lay,
And touch the boat-hulks, where they float for-
lorn,

The wounded boats of that first April morn;

Nor wake unhappily to see the sun come
And stand to arms in some Cimmerian grot—
But I, in town, well rid of all that bunkum,
I like to think that Mahomet is not;
He must sit on, now sweltering, now frozen,
By draughty cliff and many a mountain holt,
And, when rude fears afflict the prophet's chosen,
Gird on his arms and madly work his bolt,
While from the heights the awful whispers run,
"Herbert the bard is landing with his gun."

A. P. HERBERT.

ON A TROOPSHIP, 1915

Farewell! the village leaning to the hill,
And all the cawing rooks that homeward fly;
The bees; the drowsy anthem of the mill;
And winding pollards, where the plover cry.
We watch the breakers crashing on the bow
And those far flashes in the Eastern haze;
The fields and friends, that were, are fainter
now

Than whispering of ancient water-ways.
Now England stirs, as stirs a dreamer wound
In immemorial slumber: lids apart,
Soon will she rouse her giant limbs attuned
To that old music hidden at her heart.
Farewell! the little men! Their menial cries
Are distant as the sparrows' chatterings;

She rises in her circuit of the skies,
An eagle with the dawn upon her wings.
We come to harbor in the breath of wars;
Welcome again the land of our farewells!
In this strange ruin open to the stars
We find the haven, where her spirit dwells:
Where the near guns boom; and the stricken
 towns are rolled
Skyward, a-thunder with their trail of gold.

H. A.

1915

Year of high hope and disappointment deep,
Gigantic efforts both by land and sea,
Neuve Chapelle, Loos, and grim Gallipoli,
Whose tales of valor make the spirit leap
With glowing exultation, and then weep
To think how those brave boys with eager glee
Defying death, to keep our Britain free,
Rushed on their fate, and now in silence sleep.
The opening year saw stretched between the foes
A barrier of trenches long and wide;
That barrier stands as firmly at its close
Despite the thousands who have fought and died.
Away, thou year of frightfulness and hate,
The *Lusitania's* doom, sad Serbia's fate.

H. A. NESBITT, M.A.

December 31, 1915.

EASTER AT YPRES: 1915

The sacred Head was bound and diapered,
The sacred Body wrapped in charnel shroud,
And hearts were breaking, hopes that towered
 were bowed,
And life died quite when died the living Word.
So lies this ruined city. She hath heard
The rush of foes brutal and strong and proud,
And felt their bolted fury. She is plowed
With fire and steel, and all her grace is blurred.

But with the third sun rose the Light indeed,
Calm and victorious though with brows yet
 marred

By Hell's red flame so lately visited.
Nor less for thee, sweet city, better starred

Than this grim hour portends, new times succeed;

And thou shalt reawake, though aye be scarred.

W. S. S. LYON.

N. B. Written in a "dug-out" called "Mon Privilège" in "Glencorse Wood" by Westhoek near Ypres, April 9-10, Easter Week, 1915.

THE CATHEDRAL

Hope and mirth are gone. Beauty is departed.
Heaven's hid in smoke, if there's Heaven still.
Silent the city, friendless, broken-hearted,
Crying in quiet as a widow will.
Oh, for the sound here of a good man's laughter,
Of one blind beggar singing in the street,
Where there's no sound, excepting a blazing
rafter
Falls, or the patter of a starved dog's feet.

I have seen Death, and comrades' crumbled faces,
Yea, I have closed dear eyes with half a smile;
But horror's in this havoc of old places
Where driven men once rested from their hurry,

And girls were happy for a little while

Forgiving, praying, singing, feeling sorry.

CAPT. WILLIAM G. SHAKESPEARE.

GLIMPSE

I saw you fooling often in the tents
With fair disheveled hair and laughing lips,
And frolic elf lights in your careless eyes,
As one who had never known the taste of
tears
Or the world's sorrow. Then on march one
night,
Halted beneath the stars I heard the sound
Of talk and laughter, and glanced back to
see
If you were there. But you stood far apart
And silent, bowed upon your rifle butt,
And gazed into the night as one who sees.

I marked the drooping lips and fathomless
eyes

And knew you brooded on immortal things.

LIEUT. WILLIAM NOEL HODGSON.

(Killed in Action)

O. T. C. Camp, June, 1914.

THE SOLDIER

If I should die, think this of me :

That there's some corner of a foreign field

That is for ever England. There shall be

In that rich earth a richer dust concealed ;

A dust whom England bore, shaped, made
aware,

Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to
roam,

A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.

And think, this heart, all evil shed away,

A pulse in the eternal mind, no less

Gives somewhere back the thoughts by Eng-
land given ;

Her sights and sounds ; dreams happy as her
day ;

And laughter, learnt of friends ; and gentle-
ness,

In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

RUPERT BROOKE.

(Died April 23, 1915)

OUR FATHERS

Wandering spirits, seeking lands unknown,
Such were our fathers, stout hearts unafraid.
Have we been faithless, leaving homes they made,
With their life's blood cementing every stone?
Nay, when the beast-like War God did intone
His horrid chant, was our first reckoning paid
For years of ease. Their restless spirits bade
Us fight with those whose Homeland was their
own.

Rest easy in your graves, the spirit lives
That brought you forth to claim of earth the best.
Ours it is now, and ours it shall remain;
Mere jealous greed no honest birthright gives.

Shades of our fathers, hear our faith confessed,
We shall defend your Empire or be slain.

CAPT. JAMES SPRENT.

BEFORE ACTION

By all the glories of the day
And the cool evening's benison,
By that last sunset touch that lay
Upon the hills when day was done,
By beauty lavishly outpoured
And blessings carelessly received,
By all the days that I have lived
Make me a soldier, Lord.

By all of all man's hopes and fears,
And all the wonders poets sing,
The laughter of unclouded years,
And every sad and lovely thing;
By the romantic ages stored
With high endeavor that was his,

By all his mad catastrophes
Make me a man, O Lord.

I, that on my familiar hill
Saw with uncomprehending eyes
A hundred of Thy sunsets spill
Their fresh and sanguine sacrifice,
Ere the sun swings his noonday sword
Must say good-by to all of this ;—
By all delights that I shall miss,
Help me to die, O Lord.

LIEUT. WILLIAM NOEL HODGSON.

June 29, 1916.

AT SEA

*Written on board a transport in the
Mediterranean.*

The darkling night, crowning the aëry vault
Of many-starred Heaven, and the deep,
Foam-fleck'd and ever-changing mass of sea ;
The vessel gliding on, forbidding sleep.

This awesome scene, touching the inmost chord
The human heart possesses, ope's the door
Of soul, and bids it wake and think of peace,
Putting aside the baneful curse of war.

O, God of Hosts ! Giver of all that's good,
List to my prayer and let me make amends
For past forgetfulness, and to me grant
Sure, safe return for all my own, my friends.

Grant I may think less of my life, myself—
O! give me grace that I my course may run,
Doing my work, commending all I have—
My life, my all to Thee. Thy will be done!

D. O. L.

A CONFESSION OF FAITH

Who would remember me were I to die,
Remember with a pang and yet no pain;
Remember as a friend, and feel good-by
Said at each memory as it wakes again?

I would not that a single heart should ache—
That some dear heart will ache is my one grief.
Friends, if I have them, I would fondly take
With me that best of gifts, a friend's belief.

I have believed, and for my faith reaped tares;
Believed again, and, losing, was content;
A heart perchance touched blindly, unawares,
Rewards with friendship faith thus freely spent.

Bury the body—it has served its ends;
Mark not the spot, but “On Gallipoli,”
Let it be said, “he died.” Oh, Hearts of Friends,
If I am worth it, keep my memory.

CAPT. JAMES SPRENT.

“AT NIGHT-TIDE”

When all the dalliance days of youth-time are
 agone,

When gladness stands usurped by pregnant fears ;
O Spirit of diviner days,
Help me to meet the leaner years !

When Fate's last utterance makes the vacant
 chair,

And omnipresent sorrow haunts the night ;
O Spirit of diviner days,
Steel me to face the lonely fight !

So stoop, when weary eyes no more may search
 the day

When Lethe's pall enwraps the dawn-wind's
 breath ;

O Spirit of diviner days,

Gird me—that I may valiantly face death!

2ND LIEUT. H. E. WHITING-BAKER.

SONNET

Look up, O stricken eyes that long have pored
Over the sickliness of a young heart
Diseased with double doubt and the abhorred
Drugs of Self-will and Pity. Scan the chart
Of freedom in a new and noble cause.
The past is dead. A New Age now begins
Of noble servitude to nobler laws
Than those that barred by custom your lame sins.

All that is terrible is yours to face,—
You that once sought the dark noon of the storm
And only found a dust and a disgrace,—
Peril affronts you in heroic form:
Lift up your head. Prove that which was your
 boast
Though deemed long dead,—or be for ever lost!

ROBERT NICHOLS.

THE SILENCE

This is indeed a false, false night;
There's not a soldier sleeps,
But like a ghost stands to his post,
While Death through the long sap creeps.

There's an eerie filmy spell o'er all—
A murmur from the sea;
And not a sound on the hills around—
Say, what will the silence be?

R. J. GODFREY. (A.N.Z.A.C.)

CHALLENGE

Go tell yon shadow stalking 'neath the trees
With silent-footed terror, go tell Death
He cannot with Life's vast uncertainties
Affright the heart of Youth! for Youth cometh
With flush of impulse, passion to defeat,
Undaunted purpose, vision clear descried,
To counteract, lay at Death's unseen feet
The gauntlet of defiance, Far and wide,
Beyond the fear of that unknown exile,
That brim of Time, that web of darkness
drawn

Across Life's orient sky, there breaks a smile
Of light that swells into the hope of dawn:
A dream within the dark, like evening cool,
Like sunset mirror'd in yon darken'd pool.

SERGT. J. W. STREETS.

I HAVE A RENDEZVOUS WITH
DEATH . . .

I have a rendezvous with Death
At some disputed barricade,
When Spring comes back with rustling shade
And apple-blossoms fill the air—
I have a rendezvous with Death
When Spring brings back blue days and fair.

It may be he shall take my hand
And lead me into his dark land
And close my eyes and quench my breath—
It may be I shall pass him still.
I have a rendezvous with Death
On some scarred slope of battered hill,
When Spring comes round again this year
And the first meadow-flowers appear.

God knows 'twere better to be deep
Pillowed in silk and scented down,
Where Love throbs out in blissful sleep,
Pulse nigh to pulse, and breath to breath,
Where hushed awakenings are dear . . .
But I've a rendezvous with Death
At midnight in some flaming town,
When Spring trips north again this year,
And I to my pledged word am true,
I shall not fail that rendezvous.

ALAN SEEGER.

(Killed in Action, July 5, 1916)

THE DEAD

Blow out, you bugles, over the rich Dead!
There's none of these so lonely and poor of old,
But, dying, has made us rarer gifts than gold.
These laid the world away; poured out the red
Sweet wine of youth; gave up the years to be
Of work and joy, and that unhopèd serene,
That men call age; and those who would have
 been,
Their sons, they gave, their immortality.

Blow, bugles, blow! They brought us, for our
 dearth,
Holiness, lacked so long, and Love, and Pain.
Honor has come back, as a king, to earth,
And paid his subjects with a royal wage;

And Nobleness walks in our ways again;

And we have come into our heritage.

RUPERT BROOKE.

THE GRAVES OF GALLIPOLI

The herdman wandering by the lonely rills
Marks where they lie on the scarred mountain's
flanks,

Remembering that wild morning when the hills
Shook to the roar of guns and those wild ranks
Surged upward from the sea.

None tends them. Flowers will come again in
spring,
And the torn hills and those poor mounds be
green.

Some bird that sings in English woods may sing
To English lads beneath—the wind will keep
Its ancient lullaby.

Some flower that blooms beside the Southern
foam

May blossom where our dead Australians lie,
And comfort them with whispers of their home;
And they will dream, beneath the alien sky,
Of the Pacific Sea.

“Thrice happy they who fell beneath the walls,
Under their father’s eyes,” the Trojan said,
“Not we who die in exile where who falls
Must lie in foreign earth.” Alas! our dead
Lie buried far away.

Yet where the brave man lies who fell in fight
For his dear country, there his country is.
And we will mourn them proudly as of right—
For meaner deaths by weeping and loud cries:
They died pro patria!

Oh, sweet and seemly so to die, indeed,
In the high flush of youth and strength and pride.
These are our martyrs, and their blood the seed
Of nobler futures. 'Twas for us they died.
Keep we their memory green.

This be their epitaph. "Traveler, south or west,
Go, say at home we heard the trumpet call,
And answered. Now beside the sea we rest.
Our end was happy if our country thrives:
Much was demanded. Lo! our store was small—
That which we had we gave—it was our lives."

L. L. (A.N.Z.A.C.)

THE UNBURIED

Now snowflakes thickly falling in the winter
breeze

Have cloaked alike the hard, unbending ilex
And the gray, drooping branches of the olive
trees,

Transmuting into silver all their lead;
And, in between the winding lines, in No-Man's
Land,

Have softly covered with a glittering shroud
The unburied dead.

And in the silences of night, when winds are
fair,

When shot and shard have ceased their wild
surprising,

I hear a sound of music in the upper air,
Rising and falling till it slowly dies—
It is the beating of the wings of migrant birds
Wafting the souls of these unburied heroes
Into the skies.

M. R. (N. Z. HEADQUARTERS.)

“IN FLANDERS FIELDS”

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place ; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch ; be yours to hold it high.

If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

LIEUT.-COL. JOHN McCRAE.

A DEAD GERMAN

O mystical and magic moon,

That sheds soft light on this dead face
That's like King Arthur's in his swoon,

O mystical and magic moon,
Tremulously I crave a boon :

"When my times comes, do me this grace,"
O mystical and magic moon

That sheds soft light on this dead face !

LIEUT. C. G. L. DU CANN.

“I TRACKED A DEAD MAN DOWN A
TRENCH”

I tracked a dead man down a trench,
I knew not he was dead.
They told me he had gone that way,
And there his foot-marks led.

The trench was long and close and curved,
It seemed without an end;
And as I threaded each new bay
I thought to see my friend.

I went there, stooping to the ground.
For, should I raise my head,
Death watched to spring; and how should
 then
A dead man find the dead?

At last I saw his back. He crouched
As still as still could be,
And when I called his name aloud
He did not answer me.

The floor-way of the trench was wet
Where he was crouching dead:
The water of the pool was brown,
And round him it was red.

I stole up softly where he stayed
With head hung down all slack,
And on his shoulders laid my hands
And drew him gently back.

And then, as I had guessed, I saw
His head, and how the crown—

I saw then why he crouched so still,
And why his head hung down.

W. S. S. LYON.

*N. B. Written in the trenches by "Glencorse
Wood," April 19-20, 1915.*

FALLEN

We talked together in the days gone by
Of life and of adventure still to come,
We saw a crowded future, you and I,
And at its close two travelers come home,
Full of experience, wise, content to rest,
Having faced life and put it to the test.

Already we had seen blue skies grow bleak,
And learned the fickleness of fate, firsthand;
We knew each goal meant some new goal to
seek,

Accepting facts we couldn't understand;
You seemed equipped for life's most venturous
way—

Death closed the gallant morning of your day.

Oh, many a one still watching others go
Might fall, and leave no such heart-sickening
gap.

What waste, what pity 't seems to squander so
Courage that dared whatever ill might hap,
While laggards, fearful both of worst and best,
Hoard up the life you hazarded with zest!

It seems like waste to others, but to you
And the thronged heroes who have paid the
price,
Yourselves, your hopes, and all you dreamed
and knew,
Were counted as a puny sacrifice—
You knew, with keener judgment, all was
gained,
If honor at the last shone still unstained!

CORP. W. KERSLEY HOLMES.

A GRAVE IN FLANDERS

All night the tall trees over-head
Are whispering to the stars;
Their roots are wrapped about the dead
And hide the hideous scars.

The tide of war goes rolling by,
The legions sweep along;
And daily in the summer sky
The birds will sing their song.

No place is this for human tears,
The time for tears is done;
Transfigured in these awful years,
The two worlds blend in one.

This boy had visions while in life
Of stars on distant skies;
So death came in the midst of strife
A sudden, glad surprise.

He found the songs for which he yearned,
Hopes that had mocked desire;
His heart is resting now which burned
With such consuming fire.

So down the ringing road we pass,
And leave him where he fell,
The guardian trees, the waving grass,
The birds will love him well.

FREDERICK GEORGE SCOTT.

MEMORIES

The tall pines tower gauntly
Above my bedroom eaves,
With the moon, like a ghost, behind them
Peering between their leaves.
The air is warm and balmy,
And the hillside bathed in light,
But a restless mood is on me
As I think of another night.
Still more bright was the moonlight,
For the fields were swathed in snow,
And the moon peered down through the
 pine-trees,
On the hard, white ground below.
But often to aid the moonbeams
A "starlight" soared, and fell,

And now and again, to southward,
The flash of a bursting shell.
Deep, deep black the shadows
On the hard white surface showed,
Of the tall, steep, wooded hillside
Above where the Ancre flowed
Out from the German trenches
Silently through our own,
And we stood by the bank above it,
Leslie and I, alone.
Near us, a watchful sentry,
Gazing across the wire,
And three, in a tiny dug-out,
Crouched round a brazier fire.
We talked, as we stood together,
As we often before had done,
Of the times we should have together,
When at last the war was won!
Much we planned that evening,

Of the wonderful days in store,
When trench life should be as a night-
mare,
And an ugly dream the war.

You went, old man, before me;
You died as I knew you, game;
And "the wonderful days in store" now
Could never appear the same.
With the best of pals to share them
What mad, glad days they would be!
But the best of my pals lies buried
In shell-scarred Picardy.

A cloud drifts over the moonface,
And the air has grown more chill;
I turn from the open window
While the shadow climbs the hill.
But my mind still runs on that evening

When the moon shone through the pines
That grow by the Ancre River,
Behind the British lines ;
When Leslie and I together
Stood in the crisp, white snow,
With the dug-out light above us,
And the running stream below ;
And spoke of home and dear ones,
And mentioned not the war,
But only the days to follow,
The wonderful days in store.

LIEUT. ERIC FITZWATER WILKINSON, M.C.

THE VOLUNTEER

Here lies a clerk who half his life had spent
Toiling at ledgers in a city gray,
Thinking that so his days would drift away
With no lance broken in life's tournament:
Yet ever 'twixt the books and his bright eyes
The gleaming eagles of the legions came,
And horsemen, charging under phantom skies,
Went thundering past beneath the oriflamme.

And now those waiting dreams are satisfied;
From twilight into spacious dawn he went;
His lance is broken; but he lies content
With that high hour, in which he lived and
died.

And falling thus he wants no recompense,

Who found his battle in the last resort ;
Nor needs he any hearse to bear him hence,
Who goes to join the men of Agincourt.

HERBERT ASQUITH.

GOOD-BY

Evacuation of Gallipoli, 1915

It has come to the last and it's good-by, Bill,
I'm sick at the heart and sad
To leave you sleeping, old cobber, the best
That ever a swaddy had.

Somebody's bungled the job, it is said,
Who, it isn't for me to know,
But leaving the place where you fought and
died
Is stabbing my heart to go.

The lanes of mounds on the beach and hills,
In the spots that we fought to win,
The pledges of victories tardily won,
The graves of an Empire's kin.

We're going, but over Australia way
They will speak with a welling pride
Of sons who have answered the call to arms
From the city and countryside.

And whether we're leaving or whether we stay
It is much in a way the same,
For deep in the side of the green tree—Fame—
Is bitten Australia's name.

I'm going, but hoping to meet again
On the level the wily Turk,
For fighting and crouching in traverse and
trench
Is a sordid kind of work.

But war is war, and it's little to say
That our enemy played the game;
He fought as clean as a soldier may,
But I hate him just the same.

For I can't forget when you took the count
In a stunt to the left of Quinns',
A night as black as the ace of spades
Or a fallen Satyr's sins.

Soft sentiment isn't for soldier men;
But I swear when it's steel to steel
The point of my bayonet dripping red
Will prove of the things I feel.

So good-by, Bill, if the Fates are kind
When the wattle trees burst to flame,
I will twine a wreath at my saddle bow
To honor my comrade's name.

Or dozing along on the old stock horse,
In the wake of the straying sheep,
Little doubt that I'll dream of this shell-torn
spot
Where I left you here to sleep.

Asleep with honor I leave you now,
You died as you wished to die.
The days will be longer without you, Bill;
Good-by, old fellow, good-by.

FRANK E. WESTBROOK.

February, 1916.

MATEY

(*Cambrin, May, 1915*)

Not comin' back tonight, matey,
And reliefs are comin' through,
We're all goin' out all right, matey,
Only we're leavin' you.
Gawd! it's a bloody sin, matey,
Now that we've finished the fight,
We go when reliefs come in, matey,
But you're stayin' 'ere tonight.

Over the top is cold, matey—
You lie on the field alone,
Didn't I love you of old, matey,
Dearer than the blood of my own?
You were my dearest chum, matey—

(Gawd! but your face is white)

But now, though reliefs 'ave come, matey,
I'm goin' alone tonight.

I'd sooner the bullet was mine, matey—

Goin' out on my own,

Leavin' you 'ere in the line, matey,

All by yourself, alone,

Chum o' mine and you're dead, matey,

And this is the way we part,

The bullet went through your head, matey,

But Gawd! it went through my 'eart.

PATRICK MACGILL.

PRAYER FOR OUR ARMIES AT THE FRONT

O Lord of Hosts, Whose mighty arm
In safety keeps mid war's alarm,
Protect our soldiers at the Front
Who bear of war the bitter brunt.
And in the hour of danger spread
Thy sheltering wings above each head.

In battle's harsh and dreadful hour
Make bare Thine arm of sovereign power,
And fight for them who fight for Thee,
And give Thine own the victory.
O, in the hour of danger spread
Thy sheltering wings above each head.

If by the way they wounded be,
O listen to their plaintive cry,

And rest them on Thy loving breast
O Thou on Whom the cross was pressed;
And in the hour of danger shed
Thy glorious radiance o'er each head.

When pestilence at noonday wastes,
And death in triumph onward hastes,
O Saviour Christ, remember Nain,
And give us our beloved again.
In every ward of sickness tread,
And lay Thine hand upon each head.

O Friend and Comforter divine,
Who makest light at midnight shine,
Give consolation to the sad
Who in the days of peace were glad,
And in the hour of sorrow spread
Thy wings above each drooping head.

REV. THOMAS TIPLADY, CHAPLAIN.

SONNET

Coming in splendor thro' the golden gate
Of all the days, swift passing, one by one,
Oh, silent planet, thou hast gazed upon
How many harvestings, dispassionate?
Across the many-furrowed fields of Fate,
Wrapt in the mantle of oblivion,
The old, gray, wrinkled Husbandman has gone,
Sowing and reaping, lone and desolate—
The blare of trumpets, rattle of the drum,
Disturb him not at all—He sees,
Between the hedges of the centuries,
A thousand phantom armies go and come,
While Reason whispers as each marches past,
"This is the last of wars,—this is the last!"

LIEUT. GILBERT WATERHOUSE.

(Wounded and Missing, July 1, 1916)

WAR

Where war has left its wake of whitened bone,
Soft stems of summer grass shall wave again,
And all the blood that war has ever strewn
Is but a passing stain.

LESLIE COULSON.

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Andrews, C.E.

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